

THE INDIAN STUDENTS' LIBRARY

TIPPU SULTAN

BY
MEADOWS TAYLOR

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PREFACE.

THE aim of this series—*The Indian Students' Library*—is to provide convenient editions of the best books written by English authors on India and on Indian subjects. It is hoped that Indian students of the English language will find in these works an adequate representation of the life with which they are familiar. Most teachers of English in India will agree that one of their chief difficulties is the choice of suitable reading material for their pupils. At those stages of instruction that precede University study, and for some time after Matriculation, the aim of the teacher must be linguistic rather than literary. For this reason it is expedient to direct the student to such books as deal with the history, the life, the religion and the customs of his native land. In this way unnecessary and unfair difficulties of subject are avoided ; and the mind of the reader is free to engage itself with matters of language, while his interest is comfortably sustained.

From this point of view the individual books of this series have been selected, and in dealing with the original texts the following arrangements have been made —

- (1) The story has been preserved in the order of its development. The omissions made through exigencies of space do not affect either the sequence of the plot, or the original scheme of the author.
- (2) Whatever has been considered unsuitable for the school or college class-room has been removed. This has affected the original text very slightly, as no works, in them-

- (3) For the convenience of the teacher, each chapter has been divided into sections with an appropriate title. Each section is a self-contained unit with an interest of its own, and it should form a useful class lesson in itself.
- (4) There is an introduction to each book giving the essential facts of the author's career and some literary criticism of his work. This has been written mainly for the teacher. The notes have been made as brief as possible, and deal only with the outstanding difficulties of the text.

In the selection of books for a series of this kind, the range of choice is not unlimited. In some cases it is necessary to go outside of India, and to select works that deal with the East in general ; and in other cases it is expedient to introduce memoirs and records of travel that may not have been written by Englishmen. But no work has been selected that does not provide a model of pure and simple English.

It is sometimes forgotten that there is a literature of British India ; and that the history of India for a hundred years after Warren Hastings has something more to show than petty wars and domestic legislation. If this series is successful in reviving interest in a literature that deals primarily with Indian things, and in introducing that literature to the young Indian student, one object of its production will have been suitably achieved.

INTRODUCTION.

Philip Meadows Taylor was born in Liverpool in 1808. At the age of fifteen he was sent to Bombay to enter a business house, but, as his position and prospects had been misrepresented, he welcomed the opportunity of enlisting in the service of the Nizam of Hyderabad. A military commission was obtained for him through the influence of Mr. William Newnham of the Bombay Government. This kindness was never forgotten; and to his friend in 1840 Meadows Taylor dedicated the second of his novels, "Tippu Sultan."

From 1824, the year of his entering the service of the Nizam, until 1860, when failing health compelled his return to Europe, his duties were both civil and military. Up to the year 1841 his work lay chiefly with the Nizam's army. From 1841 to 1853 he was stationed in the principality of Shorapur. He then took over charge of one of the five Berar districts ceded by the Nizam, and in 1858 he returned to Shorapur as commissioner. At no period was he directly in the employment of the Crown or of the Company. Throughout his whole Indian career he was in the Nizam's service, and this may explain in part his intimacy with and sympathy for all classes of the Indian community. In 1860 he retired to Europe, and in 1876 while returning from India which he had re-visited, he died at Mentone in the south of France.

Colonel Taylor's career covers roughly the half century leading up to the Indian Mutiny and the abolition of Company rule. In the light of his experiences of that famous time he looked back upon India's past, and endeavoured to interpret her history to his own people. His service in India began in the year of the first Burmese War, and lasted until Lord Canning's proclamation of peace.

after the Mutiny. Most of the important changes of this period took place during the tenure of office of Lords Bentinck, Dalhousie and Canning. Sati had been abolished. Education was not only introduced but generously established. Railways were opened. British armies were successful against the Afghans and the Sikhs, and the Mutiny had been thoroughly quelled. In the employ of the Nizam's government, any prominent part in these great events was denied to Colonel Taylor but, if he held no distinguished military post in the Mutiny, his influence in preventing the spread of anarchy was of the greatest value. His district of Bejar had an important geographical position. His firm control of this area, his influence over the people and the love they bore him, effectually hindered the advance of sedition into the Nizam's dominions.

The events of this time are fully detailed in the autobiography entitled "The Story of my life". This is a document of great historical value, throwing light upon the conditions of Indian and Anglo-Indian life in the earlier period of the reign of Queen Victoria. It abounds with references to the outstanding men of that time, and reveals a breadth of view and a capacity for sympathy that are often thoughtlessly denied to the founders of the British Empire in India. Such debatable subjects as education, and the progressive measures of a reformer like Lord Dalhousie, were accepted by Colonel Taylor in the most enlightened spirit of sympathy with the aspirations of the Indian people. In the educational controversy of that time between the supporters of the ancient oriental classics and the advocates of English and the vernaculars as the medium of instruction, he appears to have taken a prominent and decisive part. In his letters to the *Times* he supported the view set forth in the famous minute of Macaulay, and later he wrote: "I have never regretted the part I took in this discussion when I see the noble results which have been already attained, and are rapidly advancing

year by year all over India, in all its regions and in all its vernacular languages." Equally interesting are his comments upon the work of Lord Dalhousie, whom he described as "the most practically useful and single-minded ruler that India has ever possessed." His great mind took in every question with a singular clearness, and he improved everything he touched. To him India owes electric telegraphs, railways, extension of practical education, large irrigation projects, roads and the removal of many disabilities under which Indians suffered. At no period of Indian history has the administration of India been so admirably conducted." Enough has been quoted to show the attitude of Colonel Taylor to the progressive measures of his time, and to justify, if any justification were needed, the introduction of his literary work to young Indian readers.

His career as a man of letters began early. In 1837, the year of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne, the novel known as "The Confessions of a Thug" was begun. This work was undertaken during the author's convalescence after a severe attack of fever. He says, "I wrote the Confessions to amuse myself, reclining in an easy chair, with a board on my knees, for I was too weak to sit up much—little thinking that they would ever be printed." In 1839 the first edition was published in England, and it aroused great curiosity and interest. Queen Victoria herself read the work as it was passing through the press. Colonel Taylor was well qualified to write about the Thugs. In the early days of his service under the Nizam he had begun to investigate their habits; but his military duties demanded his whole attention, and the complete investigation of Thuggee was accomplished by Colonel Sleeman who, by the year 1832, had produced such evidence as roused the whole of India and England to a state of horrified curiosity. Any work on this subject by a writer who had himself been in contact with the Thugs, and knew their habits, was likely to be successful. Colonel

Taylor soon found himself in the position of a popular author from whom the reading public demanded further efforts. He writes in the autobiography, "The Confessions have been received with much greater interest and success than I had ever ventured to hope for. It was curious to hear people wondering over the book and discussing it, and evidently the subject was a new sensation to the public. I was asked also to write another book, which should take the place of an historical novel, and become the forerunner of a series of such Indian works, and Tippu Sultan was chosen as the subject."

This second novel was published in 1840. The series which it foreshadowed was actually completed, but at a much later date, in the leisure of the author's retirement in England. The historical novels in their order were as follows —

- (1) Tara: this was published in 1863. It describes the development of the power of the Mahrattas and the blow struck by them against the Muhammadans in 1657.
- (2) Ralph Darnell. this was published in 1865. Its subject is the rise of the British power in India and the victory of Plassey in 1757.
- (3) Seeta. this was published in 1872. It describes the events of the Mutiny in 1857.

These works illustrate the great modern periods of Indian history at exact intervals of one hundred years. Of the three Tara was the most ambitious, and its success was considerable. This was all the more pleasing to the author, as he had kept silence for more than twenty years from the time of his writing the Confessions and Tippu Sultan. One other novel, "A Noble Queen," with Chand Bibi as heroine, was produced in 1875; and in 1877, the year after Colonel Taylor's death, his daughter issued his autobiography. If his many contributions to the *Times* on political subjects be excluded, a brief history of India completes the list of his literary works. This was written in order to provide

for the student and the general reader, a single narrative of the main events of Indian history in an accessible form. The work was published in 1871 after two years of patient study and research.

The novel, *Tippu Sultan*, describing the British conquest of Mysore, stands outside of the series projected in 1839, but not completed until 1872, the year of the publication of *Seeta*. The book was the direct result of the wave of popularity following upon the appearance of the *Confessions*. The title was suggested by his publisher to the author who writes in his autobiography "I remonstrated, as I considered the theme too recent, and what could I make out of it? To be sure, I had travelled through Mysore, and could describe local scenery and objects, but I fairly despaired of making a readable story out of Tippu. But my publishers were not to be convinced, and I promised to do my best." Colonel Taylor then set to work and attempted to procure accurate details. He secured an interview with the Duke of Wellington who, when in India had been in touch with the family of Tippu. How interesting in the autobiography is the record of his conversation with the great soldier: "His memory was perfectly clear, and he had forgotten nothing in regard to his own part in the first Mahratta war. He told me the *Confessions* had fairly taken him back to India." The events described in the new novel, which was rapidly completed, were within living memory. The action of the story lies between the years 1782 and 1799: that is the period of the second, third and fourth Mysore wars, when Tippu, the successor of Hyder Ali, fought against the British and was overthrown during the Governor-generalship of Lord Wellesley.

The main historical events mentioned in the novel are as follows —

- (1) The death of Hyder Ali in 1782, and the operations of the Bombay army upon the western portion of Tippu's dominions

- (2) The peace of 1784 ending the second Mysore war.
- (3) The operations of Tippu in 1788-89 against the Hindus of Malabar.
- (4) The negotiations between the court of Mysore and the Nizam of Hyderabad with a view to union against the English, and the Nizam's final refusal to assist Tippu.
- (5) The campaign of Tippu against Travancore.
- (6) The expedition of Lord Cornwallis, the fall of Bangalore and Seringapatam ending the third Mysore war (1790-92).
- (7) Lord Wellesley's operations against Mysore; the fall of Seringapatam and Tippu's death in 1799.

The last two military campaigns have not been exhaustively described by Colonel Taylor. As he himself said, they were of too recent a date to lend themselves to literary treatment. Some of the earlier events in the career of Tippu, notably the attack upon Travancore, have called forth the author's best descriptive efforts; but his representation of these events is not so much historical as imaginative, presenting to his English readers the pomp and magnificence of the princes of Southern India, and the extravagant disorder of their military operations. Most of the important historical events of the period have been embodied in the novel, but they are a mere background against which the characters move in the romantic setting created by the varied and unsettled life of their time.

The story has been given the sustained interest of a double romance, through which are connected the lives of English and Indian men and women. But the real interest of the novel lies, not in the development of its plot, but in the vivid portrayal of certain types. The warlike nature of the age is skilfully presented in the characters of Abdul Rahman Khan and the youthful Kasim Ali, capable soldiers of

fortune, and with something of the chivalry of medieval knighthood. Peculation, oppression and low cunning are impersonated in Jaffar. Ameena and the intriguing ladies of the Khan's harem provide that atmosphere of romance indispensable to the sustained interest of a novel. The whole moving life of the Indian road, where high and low jostle in company, is admirably portrayed. We hear the gossip of the cook, the whispered confidences of the waiting-women, and all the wrangle of the camp. The disturbed state of the country is illustrated by the description of the Mahratta raid, when blazing homes and murdered villagers were encountered in the march of the Khan from Hyderabad to Mysore. While the hero of the tale may be Kasim Ali, the young Patel, the sinister figure of Tippu towers above all others and compels our interest and curiosity. There is no need to question the accuracy of the novelist's presentation of this character. History has nothing worthy to record of "the Tiger of Mysore" and in addition to the historical fact, there was the personal evidence of the Duke of Wellington to assist the author in securing a truthful portrait. He has been shown to the reader in court and in camp, and in his private and public life. There is nothing to admire in him save a certain quality of physical courage. This quality appealed to the many soldiers of fortune who thronged his camp; but their leader's appalling cruelty and superstition revolted the best of these men who found Tippu a miserable creature in the final crisis of his fortunes. But his court and his state were gorgeous, and have been recreated in the pages of the novelist with a wealth of extravagant detail. There are parts of the story that move like a pageant to the sound of military trumpets, and everywhere there is profusion of colour.

Colonel Meadows Taylor lived at a time when the English novel had become the most popular form of literature in Europe. Sir Walter Scott had died in

1832, and in his romances was found the model upon which were fashioned such novels as *Tippu Sultan*. Indeed the whole setting of this work is such as would have captivated the imagination of the great artist Scott, as we may see in his novel, the Surgeon's Daughter, had become interested in India, and had touched upon the very period and place selected by the author of *Tippu Sultan*, but, before the history of England's connection with the East had been made fully known to Europe, his strength had failed. In the year 1840, when *Tippu Sultan* was published, it would have been impossible for any writer of historical romance to escape his influence. Colonel Meadows Taylor learned in the school of Scott to conjure up the past as a romantic picture, to create alternately the ideal and the realistic human type, and to abandon himself to the delight of recalling the pageantry and the glamour of an oriental court. With his great teacher he had much in common. Both were busy men of affairs to whom literature was, at least to begin with, a gentlemanly pastime. Both loved the outdoor life and both were sportsmen. A simple dignity of purpose marked the character of both; and this has been beautifully expressed by Colonel Meadows Taylor when, at the close of his life, he referred to his literary work and wrote "I wanted to bring India nearer to England—to bring its people nearer to our people, and if, by my simple descriptions of eastern life, any have felt more interest in their Indian brothers and sisters, or have been led to read and study more, my object has been attained"

CHAPTER I.

HOW A GREAT LORD TRAVELLED WITH HIS YOUNG WIFE.

1.—The Journey.

Towards the close of a day of intense heat, about the middle of June, 1788, a large party might have been seen straggling over the plain which extends southwards of the Fort of Adoni.

The leader, a man of perhaps fifty years of age, rode a powerful Dekhan horse of great spirit. But the animal was weary with travelling over miry roads the greater part of the day, and it, and its rider, were splashed with mud from head to foot.

The rider's head was wrapped up in thick folds of muslin to protect it from the scorching heat of the sun. His face was dark-skinned and much pitted with small-pox, but his eyes were large and black, and seemed to flash with a sudden light when any stumble of his tired horse provoked an impatient jerk of the bridle. His dress was of cloth-of-gold—once magnificent, but now rather soiled and tarnished, a handsome shawl was bound around his waist, and his somewhat loose trousers were thrust into a pair of yellow leather Persian boots. Over his shoulder was an old belt which supported a sword, a bright steel axe hung at his saddle-bow at the right hand, and the butt-end of a pistol peeped forth on the left. A richly ornamented shield was bound to his back by a leather strap passing over his chest.

In truth, soiled and bespattered though he was, Abdul Rahman Khan, trusted officer of Tippu Sultan, was a striking figure on these broad plains.

Six or seven horsemen immediately followed him—his own retainers, not mounted so well nor dressed so expensively as the Khan himself, but still men of gallant bearing, and well-armed.

At some distance behind the horsemen was a palankin, apparently heavily laden; for the bearers changed over frequently and struggled with difficulty through the muddy road, into which at every step they sank deeply.

In the rear of all was a string of five camels, which required the constant attention of their drivers to prevent their slipping and falling under their burdens; and with these were a number of men, some on foot carrying loads, and a few mounted on ponies, who were the servants of the Khan, and were urging on their beasts as rapidly as possible. Behind all were two led horses of much beauty, whose grooms conducted them over the firmest parts of the road.

The sun had set, and the darkness was now fast closing in. The Khan reined in his tired horse and came to a halt. The gathering gloom, the distant muttering of thunder, and the more and more vivid flashes of lightning from a black and heavy cloud which shut in the whole horizon in front of him, were enough to make him hesitate whether to proceed farther or not.

"I was an ass, and the son of an ass, to leave Adoni," he muttered, "but it is no use to regret this now; what had better be done, is the question. What think you, Daúd," addressing one of his retainers, "are we near any habitation?"

"*Hazrat*," replied the man, "I know not, I never travelled this road before, except once many years ago, and then I was with the army, we did not think much of the road then."

"True, friend," answered the Khan, "but now we have need to think. The cloud beyond us threatens much, and I fear for the Khanum. She is not used to such travelling as this, but she is a soldier's wife now, and I must teach her to bear rough work."

"The bearers of the palankin know the country well, *Hazır*," said another of the horsemen.

"True, I had not thought of them," said the Khan; "let us wait till they come up."

In a few minutes the palankin arrived, and the bearers were questioned as to the distance to the next village, the road, and the accommodation they were likely to find for so large a party.

"*Hazrât*," said the head bearer, "there is a small village over yonder rising ground—my lord can even see the trees. But there will be no accommodation there for so many people. But about three miles farther on there is a large village with a good bazaar, to which, if the lady can bear the journey, we will take her."

"What say you, my soul?" cried the Khan to the inmate of the palankin; "you have the choice of a comfortable supper and a dry lodging, or no supper and perhaps no roof over your head; you see what it is to follow the fortunes of a soldier."

"Let no thought of me trouble you," replied a low and sweet voice from within the palankin, "let the bearers and yourself decide, I am content anywhere."

"Then let us get on," cried the Khan, "before the storm catches us."

2.—*The Storm.*

After a short rest, the whole party moved off towards the nearer village. The appearance of the sky was extremely threatening. The cloud, which had been still, now began to rise gently. A few small clouds were seen as it were to break away from the mass, and scurry along the face of the heavens, apparently close to their heads, and far below the larger ones which hung heavily above them. These were followed very quickly by others. The lightning increased in vividness at every flash, and now spread itself gradually all over the heavens

Behind—above—around—became one blaze of light. In spite of appearances, however, they hurried on.

"It will be a wild night," said the Khan, replacing and binding tighter the muslin about his head and face.

As he spoke, he pointed to the horizon, where was seen a dull reddish cloud. To an unpractised eye it looked like one of the dusky evening clouds; but on closer observation, it was clearly seen to rise, and at the same time to be extending right and left very rapidly.

There was no wind—not a breath—but all was quite still. Not even a cricket or grasshopper chirped among the grass. It seemed as though nature could scarcely breathe, so intense was the closeness.

"Alas! I shall choke if there is no wind," said the fat cook, fanning himself with the end of a handkerchief, as he struggled on in the rear of the party.

"You will have enough presently," said one of the camel drivers.

At last a low moaning was heard—a distant sound as if of rushing water. The rack above them re-doubled its pace, and went fearfully fast: every instant increased the blackness on each side and behind. They could no longer see any separate clouds above, but one dense brown mass, hurrying onward, impelled by the mighty wind. Soon nothing was visible but a bright line all round the horizon, except in front, where the wall of red dust every moment grew higher and higher, and came nearer and nearer.

They increased their speed to gain some trees, which could be seen a quarter of a mile before them. "Once there," said the Khan, "we can make some shelter for ourselves with the walls of the tents passed round the trees."

No one replied to him; each was thinking of the storm and what would happen when it came. The horses, even, felt the oppression, and snorted violently at intervals, as though they wished to throw it off.

At last a few leaves flew up in the air. One little whirlwind succeeded another; and all quantities of leaves and dry grass were everywhere seen flying along the ground near the plain. The body of dust approached nearer, and seemed to swallow up everything in it.

Meanwhile the roaring increased; the roar of the wind and the roar of the thunder were fearfully mingled together. Amidst this there arose a shrill scream from the palankin; the fair inmate had no longer been able to bear the approach of the tempest.

The Khan was at her side in a moment. "Courage, my rose!" he cried, "a little farther and we shall reach a friendly grove of trees. The road is harder now, so exert yourselves," he continued to the bearers; "five rupees, if you reach the trees before the wind is upon us!"

The men redoubled their pace, but in vain; they still wanted half the quarter of the mile when the storm burst. With one fearful flash of lightning, so as almost to blind them, and to cause the whole to stagger backward, a blast met them which they could not withstand. The palankin rocked to and fro, tottered under their failing support, and fell at last heavily to the ground. There was no mischief done, but it was impossible to proceed farther, they must abide the storm where they stood in the open plain.

And now it came in pitiless earnest, as if the whole power of the winds of heaven had been collected and poured forth bodily upon one spot: while the dust, increasing in volume every instant, was so choking, that no one dared to open his mouth to speak a word. The horses and camels turned their backs to the wind, and stood motionless, and the men at last, forcing the camels to sit down, crouched behind them to obtain some kind of shelter from the raging storm.

Thus they remained for some time. At last a drop of rain fell—another and another. They could not see it coming amidst the dust, and it was upon them

before they were aware of it. They were drenched in a moment. Now, indeed, began a strife of elements. The thunder roared without ceasing one moment: there was no thunder for any particular flash—it was a continued flare, a continued roar. The wind, the rain, and the thunder made a fearful din, and even the stout heart of the Khan sank within him. “It cannot last,” he said;—but it did. The country appeared at last like a lake lit up by the blue flare of the lightning.

Two hours, or nearly so, did they endure all this. The tempest moderated at length, and they proceeded. It was now quite dark. The rain continued to pour in torrents, and the incessant flare of the lightning, which revealed the track every now and then, seemed to sweep the ground before them, nearly blinding both horse and man: it showed at times for an instant the struggles both were making in the now deeper mire.

They reached the smaller village at last. There were only three or four miserable houses, and in the state they were, there was but little to tempt them to remain there in want of food and shelter till the morning. So taking with them, much against his will, one of the villagers as a guide, and some rags soaked with oil tied on the end of a stick to serve as a torch they once more set forward.

3.—*The River.*

They had now scarcely two miles to travel, but these seemed endless. The rude torch could not withstand the deluge of rain which poured upon it, and after a struggle for life, it went out. There remained only the light of the lightning. The guide, however, was of use: now threatened, now encouraged by the Khan, he showed where the firmest footing was to be obtained, and piloted the little company through the sea of mud and water.

At last, O welcome sight! a light was seen to glimmer for a time amidst the gloom, it disappeared,

twinkled again, appeared to flit at a little distance, and was seen no more.

"What was that, guide?" asked the Khan; "one would think it was some wild spirit's lamp abroad on this unblessed night."

"It is the village, noble, sir," said the man simply; "we have no evil spirits here."

"We are near our home then; it cannot be far now."

"Not a cannon-shot; we have a small river to cross, and then we reach the village."

"A river!"

"Yes, noble Khan, a small one, there is little water in it."

But the Khan felt uneasy. "It must be full," he said to himself, "after this rain; how can it be otherwise? Every hollow we have passed has become a roaring stream, but we shall see."

They had not gone much farther before the dull sound of the river was heard but too plainly, even above the wind and the thunder, which now roared only at intervals. One and all were fairly terrified; but no one spoke till they arrived at the brink, where through the gloom could be seen a muddy torrent rushing along with fearful rapidity.

"It is not deep," said the guide; "it is fordable."

"Dog!" cried the Khan, "you have deceived us, to get us away from your miserable village. You deserve to be put to death for this inhospitality."

"My life is in your hands, O Khan!" returned the man. "Behold, to prove my words, I will venture in. If any one will accompany me; alone it is useless to attempt it. Will no one go with me?"

But one and all hesitated; the gloom, the uncertainty, and the dread of death alike prevailed.

"Cowards!" exclaimed the Khan, "dare you not do for him whose salt you eat that which this poor stranger is ready to undertake? Cowards and faithless! you are worse than women."

"I am no woman or coward," said Daúd Khan doggedly. "Come," he added to the guide, "as you are ready to go, give me your hand and step in."

"Daúd, you have a stout heart—I will remember you for this. Step on! Shout when you are on the other side."

They entered the water carefully, holding tightly each other's hand, and each planting one foot firmly ere he ventured to withdraw the other. The torrent was frightfully rapid, and it required all the power of two very strong men to bear up against it, but at length the shallow water was gained, and a joyful shout from the other side told the Khan and his expectant party that the passage had been made in safety.

"Now make haste and get a torch, and bring some people with you," shouted the Khan, "meanwhile we will make preparations for crossing."

Soon a few men were seen approaching the river's bank from the village, bearing several torches, which, being all fed with oil, blazed brightly, in spite of the wind and the rain, and cast their light far and wide.

The Khan wanted his wife to cross with him on his horse, but the sight of the rushing waters, as she peeped at them from the palankin, terrified her.

"*Hasár!*" said the chief of the bearers, "trust her to us, on our lives, she reaches the other side safely."

"Be it so then, I trust you and your party, only land her safely, and you shall be well rewarded."

So the lady remained in the palankin; both doors were opened in case of danger. The stoutest of the bearers were selected, and their chief put himself at the head. "Jai, Bhowani!" cried one and all, and they entered the raging waters.

"Shabash! Shabash!" resounded from the villagers and from the Khan's attendants, as the gallant fellows bore up stoutly against the torrent. Oil was poured upon the torches, and the river blazed under the light. The Khan was close behind on his gallant

horse, which, snorting and uneasy, was very difficult to guide. There was not a heart on either bank that did not beat with almost fearful anxiety, for the water appeared to reach the palankin, and it required the exertions of all the men to keep it steady.

"Take care! take care! a little to the right!—now to the left!—well done! well done!" were the cries which cheered them; and the passage was accomplished all but a few yards, when the water suddenly deepened—the leading bearers sank almost up to their chests. Trials were made on either side, but the water was deeper than where they stood; the eddy had scooped out the hollow since Daúd had crossed.

"Have a care, my sons!" cried the head bearer, whose clear voice was heard far above the din. "Raise the palankin on your shoulders. Gently! first you in front—now those behind! Shabash! now let every man look to his footing."

They advanced, shouting; but careful as they were, who could see beneath those muddy waters? There was a stone—a large one—on which the leading bearer placed his foot. It was steady when he first tried it; but as he drew up his other foot it rolled over beneath his weight, he tottered, stumbled, made a desperate effort to recover himself, but in vain. He fell headlong into the current.

The palankin could not be supported, and but one wild piercing shriek was heard from the wife of the Khan as it plunged into the water.

"My God!" cried the Khan in his agony—for he had seen all—"she is lost to me for ever!" And throwing himself from his horse, armed as he was, he would have been drowned, but for one of the bearers who supported him to the brink, and, assisted by the rest, immediately recovered the palankin.

CHAPTER II.

HOW A VILLAGE HEAD-MAN RESCUED A FAIR LADY.

1.—The Rescue.

The agony of the Khan can be imagined when it was discovered that the palankin was empty. The confusion which followed is indescribable. The people on the bank of the river rushed hither and thither without any definite object ; and screams from some women, who had followed the men from the village out of curiosity, rent the air and added to the wildness of the scene.

Distractedly the Khan hurried along the river-side, and in the misery of despair searched for the body of his wife. He ran from place to place, shouting her name ; he looked everywhere for any trace of her remains . but all he saw, through the almost inky darkness, was the faint glimmer of the wild waters hurrying past him. After some time of fruitless search the Khan silently gave it up ; and, followed by some of his servants, and led by the villagers, sadly and slowly walked towards the village.

But a little farther down the stream a few villagers were still searching. On a sudden an exclamation broke from one of them, a young man ; and before the others could turn to see what had caused it, he had darted from the spot and thrown himself into the roaring waters.

Cries of “ He will be lost ! He will be lost ! ” flew from mouth to mouth ; and a dozen turbans were unwound and thrown to him from the brink, as he still struggled with the current, supporting a slight and lifeless form.

Without waiting for a moment to answer the numberless queries which were showered upon him by the spectators, or to find out whether the senseless form he bore had life in it or not, he hastily covered the features from view ; and, declining the assistance of some old women who thronged around him, he pressed through them and hurried with the utmost rapidity to his home. Without ceremony he entered the zenana still bearing her in his arms, to the astonishment of an elderly dame, his mother, and several other women, servants and others, who happened to be there.

“What have you brought, Kasim Ali ?” cried his mother, —“a woman ! By your soul, say how is this, —where did you get her ?—wet, too !”

“’Tis the Khan’s wife, and she is dead !” cried many at once.

“I care not who she is,” cried the young man ; “ by the blessing of God I saw her and brought her out of the water. She is still warm, and perhaps not dead, see what you can do speedily to recover her. You can do nothing while I am here, so I leave you.”

Leaving the fair creature to their care, he again hurried forth, to see whether he could render further help to the unfortunate travellers.

Left among the women of the house, the Khan’s wife became an object of the deepest interest to these really kind people. Her wet clothes were removed, cloths were heated and applied to her body, the water was wrung from her hair, and after a while they had the satisfaction of hearing a gentle sigh escape her,—another and another at intervals.

“Thank God !” cried one of the women at last, “she has opened her eyes.”

The light was apparently too much for them, for she shut them again and relapsed into stupor, but the breathing continued, and the alarm that she had died ceased to exist. Gradually, very gradually, she regained consciousness ; and after a few hours she

was in a deep sleep, freed from all anxiety regarding her lord, who she had feared was lost.

Meanwhile the Khan and his faithful servant, Daúd, had reached the village. They had scarcely entered one of the houses, when a large body of men with torches, shouting joyfully, approached it. Daúd's heart leaped to his mouth! "She cannot have been saved!" he cried, as he ran out of the house to meet them.

"Thanks to God!" cried a dozen voices, "she has, and is in the Patel's house."

Without any ceremony they broke in upon the unfortunate Khan who sat, or rather lay, overwhelmed with grief.

"Do not mock me, I pray you," said the Khan sadly, "for grief is devouring my heart, and I am sad even to tears. And yet your faces have joy in them,—speak! she cannot live! that would be too much to hope. Speak, and tell the truth!"

"Weep not, noble Khan," said Kasim, the young man who had rescued her, "she lives, by the blessing of God,—she is safe in my own other's apartments."

The Khan started to his feet. "You do not mock me then, youth? I did not deserve this! Who saved her? Any recompense in the power of Abdul Rahman, even to half his wealth, shall be his who rescued her!"

"He stands before you, O Khan!" cried one. "it was that brave fellow who rushed into the water and rescued her."

In an instant rank and power were forgotten, and the Khan, before Kasim could prevent him, had folded him in a sincere and grateful embrace. Nay, he would have fallen at his feet, but the young Kasim prevented it and drew back.

"Not so, protector of the poor!" he cried; "your slave has but done what any man would do in a like case. Kasi Ali Patel would have disgraced himself had he turned from that helpless being as she lay in such peril on the bank."

2.—The Rescuer.

The Khan was struck with admiration of the young man, who, with excited looks and proud yet tempered bearing, drew himself up as he uttered the last words; and indeed the young Patel was a noble figure to look on.

He had not attempted to change his clothes since his rescue of the lady, but had thrown off his upper garment; he was therefore naked to the waist, and his body was only partially covered by the dark blanket he had cast over his shoulders. His tall and muscular frame was fully developed; and the broad chest, long and full arms, and narrow waist, showed his strength.

He seemed about twenty years of age. His dark expressive eyes, which glistened proudly as the Khan looked at him, his high nose, large nostrils, white and regular teeth, and, added to all, a fair skin—far fairer than most of his countrymen could boast,—showed that he was perhaps of noble blood.

"You are a noble fellow, youth!" cried the Khan "and I would again meet you as a brother, embrace me therefore, for by the soul of my father, I could love you as one. But tell me,—you saved her?—how?—and is she safe in your house?"

A few words explained all. The stream in its force had cast the lady upon a bank below, and fortunately with her head above the water. Had she not been terrified by the shock so as to lose her consciousness, she would have been able to drag herself up on the dry land, though she could not have got to shore, as part of the river flowed round the bank on which she had been cast. Thus she had continued in very great danger until rescued; for any wave or slight rise of the water must have carried her down the stream; and who in that darkness and confusion would ever again have seen her?

Gradually therefore the Khan was brought to understand the whole matter, and his thankfulness.

towards the young Kasim increased at every explanation. He was not, however, the less anxious about her who had been saved. He wanted to go at once to the Patel's house, and gave up the idea only when Daúd and Kasim declared that his going would be a risk to the lady. She too had been assured that he was safe, they said, and in this comforting certainty, overcome by fatigue and excitement, she had fallen asleep.

"But that is no reason why my lord should not come to my poor abode," said Kasim; "this open room is ill-suited to so damp a night, and my lord has been wet."

"I need but little pressing," he replied, and rose to accompany him.

Arrived at the house, which, though only a large cabin, was yet larger and more comfortable than the rest in the village, the Khan found that every preparation the inmates had in their power had been made for him. A carpet was spread, and upon it was laid a comfortable cotton mattress; this was covered with a clean fine sheet, and some very luxurious pillows placed against the wall invited him to repose.

Fatigue rapidly asserted its mastery over even the Khan's iron frame. He had been assured by Kasim's mother that his lady slept sweetly, and, having eaten a good meal, he attempted for a time to converse with the young Patel, but without much success.

The young man took, in truth, but little interest in the replies. The Khan himself was abstracted, sleep gradually overpowered him, and he sank down upon the bedding in total unconsciousness after a short time.

Left to himself, Kasim tried to sleep: but in vain. The vivid memory of the scenes of the eventful night kept him awake. At last he got up, passed through the outer chamber, where the Khan still slept with his servants around him, and opening the door softly went out into the open air.

It was now midnight, and the storm had passed away. The clear sky, studded with stars, was bright with moonlight. The violent wind had ceased, and only a gentle breeze stirred the leaves of the majestic peepul tree which stood before the house. Under its shadow the Khan's retainers and the bearers of the palankin lay sleeping, wrapped in their white sheets. Out in the moonlight, the camels of the Khan were sitting in a circle round a heap of fodder, the tiny bells round their necks tinkling gently as they moved their heads in eating. Beyond, the moonlight rested upon the white dome and minarets of the small village mosque, which appeared above the roofs of the houses, and upon the tower of the Hindu temple rising from a grove of acacia trees. Far away in the east the storm cloud which had passed over lay dark and low on the horizon, lit up every now and then with flickerings of lightning and sometimes the thunder muttered low in the distance.

After regarding with some feelings of envy the sleeping groups, Kasim sauntered leisurely towards the river's bank. The stream was still swollen and muddy, but it had subsided greatly and the bank upon which the lady had been thrown was now no longer an island. Kasim walked there. "It was here," he said, "that she lay another moment, perhaps, and she would have been swept away into eternity!"

A long time he stood there, musing: then he returned to the house, and, unknown to any one reached his room. There, soothed by his ramble and his thoughts, he sank at last to sleep.

CHAPTER III.

HOW KASIM ALI RODE OUT TO MAKE HIS FORTUNE.

I.—Ameena suggests.

Kasim Ali, or Mir Kasim Ali, as he was also called, for he was a Syud, was the only son of the Patel or head-man of the village. His father was of an old and highly respectable family of long descent, which had won renown under the Mohammadan sovereigns of Bijapur in their wars with the Hindu states of the Carnatic. He had been rewarded for his services by the hereditary Patelship, or chief magistracy, and possession of one or two villages. The troublous times between the end of the Bijapur dynasty and the subsequent struggles of the Mahratta powers, the Nizam, and Haidar Ali, for the districts in which their possessions lay, had caused many of these lands to pass into other and stronger hands.

The family, however, was still respectable, and held a good position among those of the surrounding country. Syud Nur-ud-din, the father of Kasim, was much respected, and had at one time served under the banner of Niza Ali of Hyderabad in his wars against the Mahratta powers, and had helped to guard the south-western frontiers of his kingdom against their attacks.

But his death, which had occurred some years before, had still further reduced the importance of the family; and his widow and only son could not be expected to retain the same position as the old Patel.

Still, there were many who looked forward to the rapid rise of the young man, and hoped that he would in those stirring times speedily retrieve the

fortunes of the house. On the one hand were the Mahrattas, restless, greedy of conquest, among whom a man who had any ability, and could collect a few horse-men together, was one day an adventurer whom no one knew,—another, a leader and commander of five hundred horse. On the other was the Nizam of Hyderabad, whose armies, ill-paid and ill-conducted, were generally worsted in all engagements; but who still struggled on against his enemies, and in whose service titles were readily to be won. Again, in the south, the magnificent power of Haidar Ali had sprung out of the ancient kingdom of Mysore, and bid fair, under his successor Tippu, to equal or to surpass the others.

As Kasim Ali grew to manhood, his noble appearance, his great strength, skill in all martial exercises and accomplishments, his fair knowledge as a Persian scholar, and his known bravery,—for he had distinguished himself greatly in several encounters with the marauders and thieves of the district,—had caused the families of the country to wonder which of the three Powers we have mentioned, he would join.

But he was not in any haste to quit his village. Naturally of a quiet, contemplative turn of mind, fond of reading and study, he had gradually filled his imagination with romantic tales, which helped to give him a superstitious reliance upon destiny.

His mother, who read his feelings, had repeatedly besought him to allow her to negotiate for the hand of many of the daughters of families of his own rank in the neighbourhood; but no one that she could hear of, however beautiful by description or high by birth, had any charms in the eyes of the young Kasim, who always declared he chose to remain free to make his choice wherever his destiny should, as he said, guide him.

The morning after his rescue of the Khan's beautiful young wife, Kasim Ali awoke from sleep that had been troubled with dreams. His heart was not

so light, nor his spirit so free from care, as when he had gone to rest. Nevertheless he repeated his morning prayer with earnestness, and commended himself to God, to work out his destiny as He pleased.

Abdul Rahman Khan rose late, for he had slept heavily after the fatigue and excitement of the day. He at once visited his young wife. How thankful he was to see her well ! Her eyes were as bright, her smile as sunny and beautiful, as they had ever been.

"God bless you !" said the Khan, much moved, as he seated himself by her,—for she had risen upon his entrance,—“God bless you ! it is ore to Abdul Rahman to see you thus, than to have the empire of India at his feet. And you are well ?”

"Well, indeed, my lord,—thanks to Him who protected me in the tempest," she said, looking up devoutly, "and thanks to her who, since I was brought hither, has not ceased to tend me as a daughter."

"Ay, fairest," said her lord, "what do we not owe to the inmates of this house, and indeed to all this village ? Without their aid we should have been lost."

"I have a dim remembrance of some danger," said the lady ; "I think I recollect the palankin entering the waters, and their frightful appearance, and that I shut my eyes ; and I think, too," she added after a pause, and passing her hand across her eyes, "that it seemed to slip, and I shrieked ; and then I knew nothing of what followed till I awoke all wet, and the women were rubbing me and taking my clothes off. And then I remember waking again, and speaking to the kind lady who had so watched me ; and I think I asked her how I had been brought here ; but she made light of it, and would not let me speak much, and so I went to sleep again, for I was weary. They said too you were well ;—yet," she continued after a pause, "something tells me that all was not right, that

there was danger But my memory is very confused—very.”

“No wonder, my pearl, my rose!” cried the Khan; “and how I bless that good lady for keeping the truth from you! As you were then, the remembrance of it might have been fatal. And so you, do not know that you were nearly lost to me for ever?”

“Alas, no!” said the lady shuddering; “and was I indeed in such peril? Who then saved me?”

“There was a youth—a noble fellow, a very Rustum, who saw the accident. His quick eye saw your lifeless form cast up by the boiling water, and he rescued you at the peril of his own life,—a valuable one too, fairest, for he is the son of a widow, the only son, and the head of the family,—in a word, the son of her who has tended you so gently”

“Was I in this peril, and so rescued? At the peril of his own life too,—and he a widow’s son you said? What if he had been lost?” And she fell to musing silently.

Gradually, however (for the Khan did not risk a reply) her bosom heaved a tear welled over one of her eyelids, and fell upon her hand unnoticed,—another, and another The Khan let them have their course. “They will soothe her better than my words,” he thought, and thought truly.

After a while she spoke again; it was abruptly, and showed her thoughts had been with her deliverer.

“You will reward him, noble Khan?” she said.

“Reward him, Ameena!” cried the Khan, “ay, with half my wealth, would he take it, but he is of proud blood and a long ancestry, though he is but a Patel, and such an offer would be an insult. Think—you are quick-witted, and speak your thought freely.”

“He would not take money, you said?”

“No, no,—I dare not offer it”

“Jewels perhaps, for his mother,—he may have all mine, you know there are some of value.”

"He would set no value upon them, to him they are of no use, for he is not married"

"Not married?" she said, in surprise.

"No! to his mother," continued the Khan, who had not heard her exclamation,—*"she is an old woman. No, jewels would not do, though they are better than money."*

"Horses, arms,—they might gratify him, if he is a soldier."

"Ay, that is better, for he is a soldier from head to heel. But of what use would they be to him without service in which to exercise them? Here there are no enemies, but only plunderers now and then, but—I have it now," he continued joyfully after a pause,—*"service! ay, that is his best reward,—to that I can help him. I was a fool not to have thought of this sooner. He will be a rare addition to Tippu's Royal Guard. He may have a chance in a few months to win himself not only renown, but a command, perhaps, like my own. Tippu Sultan is no respecter of persons"*

"Yes, my noble lord, such an offer would be worthy of your generosity and his acceptance," was the lady's reply. "and he could easily follow us to the city."

"And why not accompany us? I for one should be glad of his society, for he is a scholar as well as a soldier, and that is more than I am"

"Then ask him to take service in your own household troops, and hear what he says"

"Well spoken, my love!" said the blunt soldier. "Truly I owe him the price of your glorious beauty and love. So God keep you! I will not disturb you again until evening, so that you may rest from all your many fatigues and alarms."

When her husband had left, Ameena lay back on her pillows thinking over all he had told her, and wondering a little what her brave deliverer was like, and then she fell into a sleep troubled with confused dreams of the scenes of the night before—the storm—the danger—the waters—and her own rescue.

•2.—*The Khan Proposes.*

That same day, after the evening meal, Abdul Rahman Khan made his proposal to his host, Kasim Ali, as they smoked the *hooka* together. He had been relating some of his own adventures and Kasim Ali was deeply interested. "My brother," said the Khan, at last, "you see I was an adventurer, as you might be. When I entered the service of Haidar Ali, I had nothing but my arms and a horse. Now I am the commander of a thousand horse, having won with my sword a reputation second to none in his gallant army. Why should not you have the same fate? What say you, will you serve him whom I serve—Tippu, the lion of war, the upholder of the Faith? Speak, Kasim Ali, for I love you, and can help you in this matter."

"My lord draws a bright picture to dazzle my understanding," he answered. "I have sometimes had dreams of rising to rank and power, but I know well that such dreams are but the false visions of youth."

"By my beard, by your salt, I say no!" cried the Khan. "To rise from obscurity to greatness is an every-day thing in the army. What was the origin of Haidar Ali himself? Lower, much lower, than your own. You have come from noble ancestors, but his grandmother was the daughter of a poor cloth-weaver. It is destiny, young man, destiny, which will guide you."

"My lord's words are very tempting," said the youth. "I have always felt that the inactive life I am leading was a shame to me in these times. But I do not like the service of the Nizam, and the Mahrattas are not of our faith."

"Then the service of Tippu Sultan is just the service for you. Come with me; and I swear upon this my beard, and your salt, that I will be a friend and a brother to you. I owe this to you for saving the life of her who is as dear to me as my life's

blood. I desire you for a companion and a friend, and, above all, I am vexed to see you hiding here in this village and spoiling your destiny with sloth and inaction."

The young man felt the spirit-stirring address of the rough but kind soldier, deeply; but still he hesitated.

"I would gladly go with you," he said at last, "but there is my mother, and there is my—my—"

"Poverty, perhaps," said the Khan, "do not be ashamed to own to it. You would go to service as a cavalier, gallantly armed and mounted,—is it not so?"

"It is, I would not serve on foot, and I have not money to buy a horse such as I would ride into battle."

"Right! you are right, but let not this trouble you. We spoke of you this morning. we dare not offer you money—nay, be not impatient—we dare not offer you jewels, else both were yours. We could offer you honourable service; and, if you will accept it, as my brother you are entitled to look to me your elder, you know, for such matters as you need. With me are two horses, the best of the Dekhan blood, beside mine own Moti—him you cannot have—but either of the others, or both, are yours, and if they do not suit you, there are others at the city where you will be free to choose. See, I have conquered all your scruples."

The young man was much touched, and the Khan's kindness fairly brought the tears to his eyes. "Such service as I can do you, O generous man," he exclaimed, "I vow here under mine own roof and by the head of my mother,—I will follow you to the death. Such honourable service as I would alone have ever accepted is in my power, and I accept it with gratitude to you and yours, whom the Prophet shield with his choicest care!"

"It would be well if your arrangements were quickly made, for I cannot wait beyond to-morrow," said the Khan.

"The time will be enough for my small preparations," replied the youth. "I will tell my mother now."

"You do right, Mir Sahib, I honour you for your consideration. And I too will go to the Khanum. she will be glad to hear that her deliverer and her lord are now friends and brothers in service."

When Kasim Ali told his mother of his decision to go with the Khan, her grief was at first uncontrollable. But she soon saw what a splendid chance it was for him to win fame, honour and wealth, and being a woman of common-sense, she dried her tears and gave her consent to his going. He quickly made arrangements for the management of the property and the care of his mother during his absence, and the next morning he was ready to begin his journey with his new friend.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW KASIM ALI MET HIS FIRST ADVENTURE.

1 — The Hunt.

‘ Ay, now you look like a gentleman, as you are in very truth,” said the Khan to Kasim, after they had ridden a few miles the following morning “ But have you been instructed, Mir Sahib, in the arms you wear ? Can you play with sword and shield ? and what sort of a marksman are you ? ”

“ As a marksman, Khan, I have pretty good practice at the deer which roam our plains and spoil our corn-fields , as to the rest, you know I am but a village youth.”

“ Modestly spoken, Mir Sahib. Now take Ibrahim’s gun and kill me one of those deer yonder ,” and he pointed to a herd which was quietly browsing at some distance . “ we will put it on a camel, and it will be a supper for us.”

“ I will try, Khan Sahib,” returned Kasim joyfully and eagerly , “ only stay here, and dismount if you will, lest they should see you , and if I can get within shot, you shall have the deer.”

“ Give him your gun then,” said the Khan to his retainer , “ is it properly loaded ? ”

The palankin was put down, and all waited the issue with much interest and anxiety.

The Khan went to the palankin. “ Look out, my rose,” he said , “ I have dared the Patel to shoot a deer, and he has gone to do it. Look, see how he creeps onward, like a cat or a panther.”

The lady looked out. It was very exciting to her to see the movements of the young man , and she actually put up a mental prayer for his success.

"Give him a steady hand!" she said inwardly, and looked the more.

"He will be near them soon," said the Khan, shading his eyes with his hands, "there is a water-course yonder which will afford him cover, can you see? This is better than shooting one oneself."

"They have seen him!" cried the lady, as one of the deer which had been lying down got up and gazed warily about. "They will be off ere he can get within shot."

"Not so," cried the Khan, "he has crouched down. See! raise yourself a little higher, look at him crawling."

Kasim's progress was slow, and had he been alone he would have given up the pursuit, but he knew the Khan was observing him, perhaps Ameena. It was enough,—he crept stealthily on.

"He will never get near them," said Zulfikar, the fat cook. "Who is he—a village Patel—that he should shoot? See how he is crawling on the ground as a frog would—can't he walk upright like a man?"

"He knows well enough what he is doing, you father of owls," said Ibrahim. "We shall all eat venison to-night, and you will have to cook us *kabobs* and curries."

"Venison makes a good curry," mused the cook, "and *kabobs* are also good, dried in the sun and seasoned."

"Look! he is going to shoot," cried the Khan, "which will it be? I wager you a new scarf he does not kill."

"I agree," said the lady, "he will kill, by the blessing of God,—I feel sure he will."

But Kasim's gun went down.

"He is too far off yet," she said, and he was. He saw a mound at a little distance from him, and tried to reach it, crawling on as before.

But the deer saw him. He observed their alarm, and lay motionless. They all got up and looked,—he did not move. The buck trotted forward a few

paces, saw what it was, and ere the young man could get his gun to his shoulder as he lay, he had turned.

"I told you so," cried the Khan; "they are off and I have won."

"There is yet a chance," said Ameena anxiously.

"I said he would not kill," said the cook, "we shall have no venison."

They were all wrong. Kasim saw there was no chance unless he rose and fired, so he rose instantly. The deer regarded him for an instant, turned as with one motion, and fled bounding away.

"There is yet a chance," cried Ameena again, as she saw the gun pointed. "Well done! he has won my wager!" she added, clapping her hands.

He had, and won it well. As the herd bounded on, he waited till the buck was clear of the rest. He fired; and, springing high into the air, it rolled forward on the ground.

"*Shabash!*" exclaimed the Khan, "he has done it,—he is as good as his word,—he is a rare marksman. So you have won your wager, beloved," he added. "Well, I vow to you a Benares scarf. you shall have one in memory of the event."

"Go, some of you," continued the Khan, "and take the lightest laden of the camels, for the Patel is beckoning to us. bring the game hither speedily."

The deer was soon brought, and laid near the palankin, where the Khan stood.

"Ay, now you can see it," he said to the lady, who, closely veiled, yet had holes for her eyes through which she could see clearly. "Is it not a noble beast?—fat, too! It was a good shot at that distance."

"It was partly accident, Khan Sahib," replied Kasim.

"Not so, by your beard, not so, Patel; it was no chance. I should be very sorry to stand for you to shoot at even farther than it was."

"I should be very sorry to shoot at my lord, or any one but an enemy," he returned, "seeing that I rarely miss my mark whether on foot or on horseback."

"I believe you," returned the Khan; "but where is that lazy cook?" he cried, after he had mounted.

"Here!" cried Zulfikar, urging on his pony from behind as fast as he could "What orders has my lord for his slave?"

"See that there is a good curry this evening; do you hear?"

"My lord and the Mir Sahib shall say they have never eaten such," said the cook joyfully. "It will be one fit for the Sultan himself."

And now the party rode on merrily, though not fast. The Khan became more and more pleased with his new friend every hour that they rode together. Kasim's stores of learning were not extensive, but so far as he possessed knowledge of books, he unfolded it to the Khan. He recited pieces from the Persian and earlier Urdu poets, until the Khan, who had never thought of these accomplishments himself, and who knew none who possessed them, was fairly astonished.

But after a few hours' ride, they were near the village they were to rest at. As the headman of this village was a friend of Kasim, they had a good reception. And they all enjoyed the curry which the fat cook made from the deer Kasim Ali had shot.

2 — *The Raid* *

The next day they rested at the town of Bellary, and as there was an alarm of parties of Mahratta horsemen being abroad, the Khan determined to travel by the eastern road by Nundidroog, from there he could reach Seringapatam, either by Bangalore, or by the western road, as best suited him. But no enemy appeared, though several alarms were given by the people.

At one place, after some days' travel, they heard that a party of horse had passed the day before, and at the stage after, they kept watch all night. And it was necessary, for a marauding party was evidently in their neighbourhood, as could be plainly

seen by the burning of a small village some miles away.

"This looks like danger," said the Khan, as from the tower in the middle of the village in which they were resting, he and Kasim looked forth over the wide plain, "the rascals yonder are at their old work."

"If it were day we could see their number," said Kasim. "But perhaps it is only a chance fire after all."

But soon after some men mounted on ponies arrived, bringing the news that their village had been attacked in the evening by about fifty Mahratta horsemen, who had set fire to the houses after taking all the spoil they could find.

As they were talking, the Khan cried out, "What is that?" Kasim Ali looked where his finger pointed, and saw a red light in a village quite near them, which, as he gazed, broke forth into a blaze of brilliant fire which shot up to the sky in great flames.

"It must be the Mahrattas, and yet none are to be seen," said Kasim.

"They are among the houses," said the Khan, "they will not come out until they are obliged."

He was right; for while all were watching anxiously the progress of the flames, which they could see spreading from house to house, there rushed forth in a tumultuous manner from the opposite side a body of perhaps twenty horsemen, whose long spears, the points of which every instant flashed through the gloom, proved them to be the Mahratta party.

"Base sons of dogs!" cried the Khan, "cowards to attack defenceless people in that way!—to burn their houses over their heads at night! Oh, for a score of my own regiment and those rogues should pay dearly for this!"

"Who will follow Kasim Ali?" cried the young man. "We are no thieves, and our hearts are strong. I say one of us is a match for two of those cowards: who will follow me?"

"I!"—"and I!"—"and I!" cried several; and turned to follow the young man who had his foot on the steps ready to descend.

"Stop, I command you!" cried the Khan; "this is no time to risk anything look yonder,—you thought there were but twenty, if there is one, there are more than fifty."

They looked again, and beheld a fearful sight. The now blazing village was upon a gentle slope, hardly a mile from them—a glowing spot in the intense blackness of the night. Around the ill-fated village was an open space, upon which bright ground were the dark figures of the Mahratta horsemen in constant motion, while the black forms of persons on foot—evidently the miserable inhabitants, in vain striving to escape—became, as they appeared, objects of fearful interest. Now many would rush from among the houses, pursued by the horsemen, several would disappear in the darkness, and, they supposed, had escaped, whilst others but too plainly fell, either by the spear-thrusts or under the sword-cuts of the horsemen.

"This is hard to bear!" exclaimed Kasim, "to see those poor creatures butchered in cold blood, and yet have no means of striking a blow in their defence!"

"It would be impossible for us to do any good," said the Khan; "suppose they were to come on here after they had finished yonder. I see nothing to prevent them"

"Yes, Khan, they will come," said the village Patel, who had joined them in the tower

"We had as well be fully prepared," said the Khan, "have you any cannon?"

"We have two," said the Patel of the village

"Run then and bring them here,—also what powder you can find; and alarm the village. Kasim," he continued, "wait here; there is a room in the tower,—thither I will bring the Khanum, and what valuables we have with us. I do not fear danger, but we had better be prepared."

In a short time the Khan returned, conducting his wife, she was veiled from head to foot, and a moment afterwards they were on the top of the tower.

"Do you see anything more, Kasim?" he asked.

"Nothing,—the village continues to burn, and the men are there, but either the people have escaped, or they are dead, for none come out now."

"Sound the alarm!" cried the Khan to some men below, who, bearing a large tambourine drum and a brass horn, had assembled ready for the signal. "If the horsemen hear it, it will tell them we are on the alert."

The deep tone of the drum and the shrill and wild notes of the horn soon aroused the villagers from their sleep, and numbers were seen flying to the tower for refuge, believing the Mahrattas were truly upon the outskirts of the village.

"I had better go down," said Kasim, "and prepare the men below the women and children can get into the tower, those whom it will not contain must remain at the foot in these houses. It will be strange if any harm reaches them there."

In a short time all was arranged. the women and children were in places of safety, and on the summit of the tower about twenty men, for whom there was ample room, were posted, all well armed with guns. The two small cannons were loaded, a good many men were stationed around the foot of the tower, and all were ready to give whatever should come a very warm reception.

The fire of the village burned lower and lower and at last became only a dull red glow, with occasionally a burst of sparks. While they wondered which way the horsemen would come, a few of the wretched inhabitants of the village which had been destroyed came running to the foot of the tower.

"Defend yourselves! defend yourselves!" they cried with loud voices, "the Mahrattas are upon you—they will be here immediately!"

"Admit, one of them," said the Khan, "let us question him"

The man said he had passed the horsemen, who were trying to get across a small rivulet, the bed of which was deep mud. They had not been able to find the ford, and were searching for it, but they knew of the village, were elated with success, and determined to attack it.

"They shall have something for their trouble then," said the Khan; "they know not that Abdül Rahman Khan is here, and they will buy a lesson, let them come"

"Away, some of you" cried the head-man to those below, "watch at the outskirts! And, hark you, they will come by the north side,—there is an old house there, close to the gate,—when they are near, fire the thatch as it burns we shall be able to see and mark them."

"I thank you for that," said Kasim, "now let all be as silent as possible. Listen for every sound—we shall hear their horses' feet"

3.—*The Fight*

There was not a word spoken. Even the women were still, and the children, now and then only the wail of an infant would be heard from below. All looked with straining eyes towards the north side, and the best marksmen were placed there under the direction of Kasim.

"Hark!" said Kasim at length; "what is that?"

They all listened more attentively, the village dogs—first one, then all—barked and howled fearfully.

"They come!" cried the Khan, "I have been too long with bodies of horse not to know the tramp"

"Now every man look to his aim!" cried Kasim cheerfully; "half of you only fire. And you below, fire if you see the."

Almost as he spoke the scouts they had sent out set fire to the thatch of the old house by the village gate; and in a few moments it burst into a blaze, illuminating all around and shewing up distinctly the body of horsemen who were rapidly advancing over the open space before the village.

The Mahratta horsemen did not perceive the trap which had been prepared for them. They thought that the fire was accidental, and on they came at a fast gallop,—fifty perhaps, wild figures brandishing their long spears, and with loud shouts they dashed forward! The light shone broad on their muffled faces and on the gay red cloth saddles, and glanced from their spear-points and other weapons.

“Hari Bōl!” cried the leader to his men, turning round on his saddle, waving his sword, which all could see was dim with blood.

“Hai! Hai! Bōl!” arose the cry from fifty hoarse voices, which mingled with the quick trampling of the horses.

“Now!” cried the Khan

“Wait one instant!—let them come up,” exclaimed Kasim

They were close to the burning hut, when Kasim, whose gun had been steadily aimed, resting upon the parapet, fired. The leader reeled back in his saddle, waved his sword wildly in the air, and fell

“Bismilla!” shouted the Khan, the rest of the invocation being lost in the loud report of the cannon. With it were the flashes and reports of a dozen other guns, and as the smoke cleared away, they could plainly see four of the men on the ground struggling, and two or three others apparently badly hit supporting themselves in their saddles.

“Give me another gun, another gun!” cried Kasim, “there is no time to load. Another gun, I say! Will no one hand me one?” he continued, vainly trying to load his own quickly.

"Do you, not hear?" exclaimed a female voice near him; and as he turned to look, he saw a figure snatch one from a villager, and hand it to him. It was the Khan's wife!

"Come on, you base born!" cried the Khan, who was pointing the remaining cannon at the group, which, staggered by their loss, had halted for a moment. "Come on, you sons of dogs,—come and taste of death! Ha! do you hesitate? then you shall have it again!" and he fired. "Look you, Mir Sahib," he cried in exultation, "two are down—another! Well shot!"

"Here is another gun, Mir Sahib," said the same sweet voice, and the lady handed him one.

"What, you here, my pearl!" cried the Khan. "Shabash! So you would not remain below? No wonder, with those screaming women and you are welcome here too, if you dare to look on, and see those murdering villains go down like sparrows. Another! See, the dog fairly rolls over and over! Why do you not come, O valiant eaters of dirt? By your souls, come on,—we have more for you!"

"They have had enough, I think, Khan," said Kasim; "they are drawing off"

And they were indeed. The plundering band, unprovided with guns, could make little impression on a village so well defended, and hastily turned about their horses. Those who had remained below were informed of this by the village head-man who had descended, and, led by him, they quickly advanced to the edge of the village, whence they could fire without exposing themselves.

"Who will strike a blow with Kasim Ali?" cried the youth, who was not now to be controlled. "Come, who will?—there are the horses saddled below"

In vain was it that the Khan held him for an instant, while he heard the voice of gentle entreaty from the lady. He hurried down the steps, followed by several of the Khan's men. Throwing themselves on their horses they dashed after the fugitives.

They soon cleared the village, and what followed was intensely watched by the Khan and Ameena.

"May God protect the youth!" ejaculated the lady.

"Amin!" cried the Khan, "look! he is upon them now, and three of my men after him. See—one goes down beneath that cut!" for they saw the sword of Kasim flash in the light. "He is by another, the fellow cuts at him. Well paired! now give it him! A curse on the darkness," he continued after a pause, as, shading his eyes with his hand, he endeavoured to pierce the thick gloom. "Can you see, Ameena?"

"No, my lord. I lost him as you did—God be his shield!"

"To be sure he is what could those cowards do against such an arm and such a heart? I tell you gul, we should have eaten dirt but for him."

"He is a brave youth," she said.

A few scattered shots here and there, which were farther and farther removed every moment, showed that the marauders were retreating, and soon the men began to return one by one. In a few minutes they saw Kasim Ali and his companions approaching quietly, which assured them there was no more danger, and the party had retired beyond the limits of safe pursuit.

"Come down and meet them, fairest," said the Khan, "they who have fought so well for us deserve a warm welcome."

As Kasim and his companions rode up, they were greeted with hearty congratulations on their success, and the Khan was loud in his praises.

CHAPTER V.

HOW KASIM ALI MADE ENEMIES.

1.—Madar Sahib.

The next morning the village head-man⁷ advised them to depart immediately, and after a hasty meal, the party assembled to start.

Nine of the Mahrattas had fallen in the attack, and five of their horses had been captured. The horses the Khan kept for his own use, and generously gave whatever plunder was found on them and on the dead Mahrattas to be divided among the sufferers of the village they had seen burnt.

Now, therefore, our travellers are once more upon the wide plains, moving closely together and keeping a sharp look-out for wandering bands of Mahratta horsemen. But the rest of their journey was undisturbed.

In two days they reached the rugged mountain pass leading behind the fort of Pencondah. They were now on the Mysore plateau, and the air was cool and invigorating after the heat of the plains, over which they had travelled so long.

The Khan had intended proceeding by easy stages, but the news he had heard of rumours of fresh wars, and of the personal activity of Tippu among the army, made him more than usually anxious to press forward.

So on the fifth day they were at Balapur; and leaving the lady to the care of the servants to rest for awhile, the Khan, accompanied by Kasim, rode forward to the town and fort of Nandidrúg, where he knew some of his own men were stationed.

Soon afterwards they rode into the outer court of the Temple of Nandí, the town under the fort of

Nandidrúg. The court was a large square, and in the centre were a few gay tents, and many camels and several elephants were sitting and standing near them. Around were groups of soldiers—some lounging and swaggering about, armed to the teeth, some sitting upon carpets smoking and listening to wandering musicians or story-tellers. In various parts were little booths, where women were selling fruit and sour curds, with a thousand other busy, bustling occupations going on in full vigour.

Above all frowned the bare rock of the Fort,—a naked mass about eight hundred feet high, arising from a rugged woody slope of an equal height. The walls around the summit were bristling with cannon, and the numbers of armed men about showed that it had many defenders.

"What think you of my fine fellows, Kasim?" said the Khan, as they passed various groups of stout, soldier-like men. "They are worth looking at."

"Most truly they are," replied the young man, "and do you really command all these, Khan Sahib?"

"Most of them; though no doubt some of the garrison of the fort are here also. But these are not all: we have three times as many at Seringapatam. But there is surely more activity than usual going on. This looks very like the preparations for a march."

As he spoke, the Khan dismounted before a large tent, and unfolding the muslin scarf he had tied about his face, he was at once recognised by a number of men who were lounging about.

"The Khan Sahib is come!" shouted several to their companions.

"My lord's footsteps are welcome!" cried those who were nearest. "Victory waits upon them."

"It is a fortunate hour that has brought him," cried another, who pressed forward, and bowed before him. "What are my lord's wishes? let him order his slave, Dilawar Ali, to perform them."

"Ha! are you there, friend?" said the Khan. "Well, since you wish for employment, go on, and

tell the Jemadar Sahib that I am here. Which of the officers is with you?"

"Jaffar Sahib, *Hasir*! He will have rare news for my lord," and he departed.

"This looks like a march," said the Khan to another: "say, is it so?"

"It is, protector of the poor! But we know but little of the true cause as yet, though many rumours are afloat; the most prevalent is—"

But here he was interrupted by the Jemadar himself, who had hurried from his tent, and now advanced towards them. The two leaders embraced cordially.

"You are welcome, Khan Sahib," said Jaffar; "but do not remain here. come. I pray you, to your servant's tent, and rest after your journey"

He went in, and was soon seated upon soft cushions in the Jemadar's tent. Kasim followed; but, uncertain how to act, he continued standing, until he was asked by the Khan to be seated near him. This, together with the Khan's marked attention to the young man, appeared rather to displease the Jemadar, who regarded the new comer with some suspicion, and, Kasim could not help imagining, with some dislike. I shall have an enemy in this man, thought Kasim for an instant; but he reflected that he had nothing to fear, and soon ceased to notice the furtive looks of the Jemadar, which were cast upon him from time to time, as the Khan appealed to him in support of his opinions or remarks during the conversation.

It was true that the corps was about to move. All the outposts, except a few of those immediately upon the Mahratta frontier, had been called in, and had joined within the past day or two, and the morrow had been fixed for the departure of the whole from Nandidrug towards the capital. For the reason of this many rumours were in circulation.

For the present, the Khan and Kasim were the guests of the Jemadar, and having partaken of

refreshment, they set out to find a resting place for the night.

As they went forth, many were the hearty greetings which saluted the Khan, every veteran especially, whose deeply-scarred face and breast gave a sure proof of often tried courage, met him with a hearty familiarity and yet the proper respect due to his rank. All were so evidently glad at the Khan's return that Kasim Ali began to suspect that the Jemadar, Jaffar Sahib, was not much liked among them.

And indeed he was not. Though he originally belonged to the lowest rank of the people, he had risen rapidly to the position he held. His ability as a soldier and his ferocity of character had early attracted the attention of the Sultan, who found he could always be relied upon as a willing instrument to carry out any cruelty he willed. His hatred of the English was well known, and was exceeded in all that army only by that of the Sultan himself.

The presence of Kasim, in such close friendship with his Commander, immediately became a source of vexation to him, and as soon as he had seen him, he hated him, and feared for his own position. The Khan had not mentioned Kasim to him, and he could not guess in what capacity he attended upon his person, and he burned with curiosity to find out. When the Khan was gone, therefore, he questioned one of his officers, one Madar Sahib, a man who had followed his fortunes and who often shared with him whatever spoil was wrung from the unfortunates whom they could get into their power.

"A curse upon the old fool," he said; "could not he have kept away for a day longer? I tell you, Madar, his coming just now is not only a thousand rupees out of my pocket, but the loss to me of all the honour, credit, and influence which a short campaign would have given. I say, a curse on him."

'Amin!' said his servant; "my lord's star is 'unfortunate to-day; but it will brighten."

"And then that smooth-faced boy that he has brought with him," he continued, not heeding the other's remark, "Know you anything of him?"

"Nothing *Hazūr*; but I can inquire."

"Do so,—see what has brought them together. Perhaps he is the brother of this new wife he has married. If so, we may soon expect to get our leave to depart, Madar, for the old Khan will use his utmost influence to secure a good place near himself for his pet."

"God forbid! my lord has no cause to think so as yet; but I go, and will soon bring the information."

While this conversation was going on, the Khan and Kasim had found a small court of the Temple, and there had encamped their small party, for the Khan's retainers and servants, with Ameena, had come from Balapur.

Madar waited for a while, until he saw that the Khan's servants had arrived. Then, taking his silver stick of office with him, he sought their little separate encampment. He lurked about the busy and tired men for some time, not risking a remark to any one, lest he should meet with a sharp repulse, which indeed was to be expected; seeing that after a long march, men who must provide and cook their dinners, have much more to do than to hold conversations with prying inquirers.

At last he ventured to question Daūd, the Khan's servant, who was busy preparing his master's *hooka*, but, as he could get nothing out of that faithful man's short answers, he tried a groom who was busy with one of the Khan's horses.

With him he was more successful, and soon he learned the history of the young man and the events which had occurred during their march from Hyderabad. Stored with these, he was preparing to depart, when he was roughly addressed by Kasim and Dilawar Ali, who had observed him in conversation with the groom, for Dilawar Ali well knew the

character of the man to be of the worst kind, and that the inquiries he was making were to gratify the curiosity of his master, or perhaps to serve worse purposes.

Dilawar Ali was an officer who commanded a Daffa or division of the corps, and a man of some authority; and he cared little, now that his Commander had arrived, either for the man or his master. So he cried out lustily, "Ho! Madar Sahib, what seek you among the newly-arrived servants of the Khan? Your appearance is like a bird of ill-omen,—like the first vulture to a dying sheep. What has he been asking of you?" he said to the groom, "speak, and fear not."

"May I be your sacrifice," replied the man, "he did but ask about the Patel Sahib yonder," for so Kasim continued to be called among them.

"And what would you know about me?" cried Kasim; "what am I to you or to your master?"

"Nothing, nothing, noble sir; only my master (may his prosperity increase!) bid me ask, in order that he might know something of one whose appearance is so like that of a youth brave in war."

"Your words are smooth for once," said Dilawar Ali; "but I know you well, Madar Sahib, and your master too, and I warn you of both, Kasim."

"I will tell you more plainly, Madar Sahib," said the young Patel,—whose blood was fired by the thought that any one should be so soon prying into his affairs in the camp,—"that if ever I catch you about this encampment of ours, or tampering with any of my lord the Khan's servants, I will break every bone in your skin: do you hear?"

"My lord!" began the fellow

"Nay, no more," continued Kasim, "or I may be tempted to give way to wrath, begone!"

Some others who were standing by caught the words of the young man, and laughed loudly, and their taunts, added to the previous ones he had been obliged to hear, caused Madar to slink off as fast as

possible, followed by the jeers and abuse of those who had joined in the laugh against him.

"He is off like a maimed cur!" cried one. "You have eaten dirt!" cried another. "God give you a good digestion of it, and appetite for more the next time you come."

2.—*Jemadar Jaffar Sahib.*

Madar went off quickly, only once looking^g behind him to throw a glance of hate at those by whom he had been threatened, and was soon lost in the crowd.

"There goes a spiteful heart," said Kasim; "did you see the look he cast behind him?"

"Ay, brother," replied Dilawar Ali; "you have said truly, he has a spiteful heart, and I could tell you many a tale of his iniquity; but I am half sorry that we did not speak him fair."

"I am not: I would rather have an open enemy than one who pretends to be a friend."

"The scoundrel will tell all he has heard, and as much more as he can invent, to the Jemadar yonder."

"And what of that?" said Kasim; "what have I to fear?"

"This is no place to speak of *him*," said his friend; "come to my tent, I will tell you much of him."

And truly the account Dilawar Ali gave of the Jemadar was not calculated in any way to allay fear, if any had existed in Kasim's heart for it was one of deceit, of villainy often successful, of constant intrigue, and of cruel revenge. But the young man's fearless spirit only made light of these, which might have disquieted a more experienced person; and he asked gaily.

"But what makes you think that he bears me any enmity? We have as yet hardly seen each other."

"I know it from his vile face, Kasim. While the Khan often spoke to you kindly in his presence, his eyes wandered to you with a bad expression, and they no sooner left you than he and that Madar of

his exchanged furtive glances. I was watching them, for I saw at once he would be jealous of you."

"He may do his worst," said Kasim, "I care not." But in spite of this expression, his heart was not quite so free of care about what had happened as it had been before he had heard Dilawar Ali's stories.

✓Madar returned, burning with spiteful and revengeful feelings, and, with much excitement, he rushed into his master's presence and flung his turban on the ground, while he gnashed his teeth in rage.

"What news have you, Madar? What has been done to you? Speak, good man. What has happened?"

"Judge if I have not cause to be revenged, *Hazúr*. I am less than a dog; and may my grave be unblest if I do not avenge the insults I have suffered both for myself and you. O my lord!"

"Why, what has happened?"

"I tell you, you have been reviled by Dilawar Ali, and the boy whom that old fool the Khan has brought with him. Hear, Jemadar Sahib, what they said, (and Madar twisted up his moustachios fiercely as he spoke), "They said they did not value you a broken pice, and they threatened to beat e, to break every bone in my skin."

"They said this?—Ah!" cried the Jemadar, who had heard out his servant's tale with some difficulty,—“they said it,—and you had ears to hear it? Am I a sheep or a cow to bear this?—I who am a tiger, an eater of men's hearts,—before whom men's livers turn to water,—that I should be obliged to devour such abomination! And so you heard all this abuse of me, and ate dirt yourself, and had not the heart to say a word or strike a blow in return! I could spit on you, coward!"

"May I be your sacrifice, *Hazúr*, I was helpless: what could I have done in that crowd?"

"They shall rue the day that they uttered the words you have repeated. Madar, they shall wish their tongues had never said them. I have got power, and can crush that butterfly, whose gay bearing is only for a season,—but not yet—not yet."

"And who is this proud fool?" he continued after a pause, to Madar, who had been drinking in every word of his master's with greedy ears, and rejoicing in the hope of speedy revenge. "Who did you say he is?"

"A Patel, noble sir,—a miserable head-man of a village."

"Who is he? and how comes he with the Khan? Tell me, or I will beat you with my shoe!"

"My lord, be not angry, but listen. He is the Patel of a village where the Khan and his young wife were nearly drowned. He saved the lady, and he fought afterwards against some Mahiattas when they attacked the village where the Khan was resting for the night"

"And this is all, Madar?"

"It is, protector of the poor! it is all; they say the Patel is a hero—a man who killed fourteen Mahrattas with his own hand, who—"

"Bah!" cried Jaffar impatiently, "and you are a fool to believe them," and he fell to musing. "He must have seen her face," he said at length aloud

"He must," echoed his attendant, "they say he carried her in his arms from the river."

"Good! and what said they of her beauty?"

"That she is as fair as the full moon."

"Good! and he has seen her again, I doubt not, since then."

"God knows!" said Madar, raising his thumbs to his ears. "How should your slave know? But it is likely,—people cannot conceal their faces when they are travelling."

"No, nor wish to do so! but we shall see. Take care that you mention not abroad what occurred this evening,—they will forget it."

"But my lord will not!"

"I never forget an insult till I have had its exchange, and that you well know, Madar. Begone ! make it known without that I may now be visited. We will consider of this matter."

3 — *Munshi Nasir-ud-Din.*

The day after, the Khan's regiment halted at Bangalore, whence it was ordered to escort some treasure, military stores and many English prisoners to the capital.

The Khan having now taken over command, was able to employ Kasim in many useful offices. And though he held no situation in government service, he was courted and made much of by the subordinate officers, because of the favour shewn him by the Khan: but a small party, headed by Jaffar Sahib, regarded him with jealousy and dislike.

The most prominent of these, after Jaffar Sahib himself, was Munshi Nasir-ud-Din, the chief accountant and secretary of the regiment,—a wily and corrupt scoundrel. He was the constant associate of Jaffar Sahib, and the two had been partners in many a plan for cheating the Government by false musters of men and extra charges for grain and forage.

For want of occupation Kasim had asked the Khan for some employment, and he had requested him to look after his own horses, and to examine the accounts which the Munshi should furnish of their expenditure; and for this office Kasim was well-fitted, not only by his knowledge of writing, but also by his experience, as a Patel, of the prices of grain and forage.

When he came to inspect the Munshi's accounts, he soon found that the rates and quantities charged were much greater than the truth, but he did not dare at first to make any accusation against a man of the Munshi's apparent honesty and respectability. While they were at Bangalore, however, he made a daily memorandum of the prices of

grain in the bazaars, and inquiries also from the grooms as to the quantities used. When he compared these with the memorandum given him by the Munshi, the deceit was too flagrant to pass unnoticed. He, therefore, without making any accusation, pointed out some of these inaccuracies, as he supposed they must be, in the accounts, to the Munshi.

That evening Munshi Nasir-ud-Din visited his friend the Jemadar in no very amiable humour.

"Things have come to a pretty pass since the Khan has brought that boy with him!" said he indignantly to the Jemadar when they were alone.

"How? has he interfered with you, as he appears to wish to do with everyone else?"

"To be sure he has. It seems he can read; and the old fool, without thinking about it, gave him all my accounts of the regiment to look over, instead of signing and passing them at once."

"And he discovered—"

"No, nothing in them, God be praised! so that there is a good round sum to divide between us; but he evidently suspected the rates of grain, which, believe me, Jemadar, you put too high."

"And what did you do? you surely did not alter them?"

"Why, what else could I do, Jemadar? I at last pretended to see the mistake and make fresh accounts."

"In other words, O cowardly fool! you ate dirt. You allowed him to obtain a mastery over you which you will never regain. You call yourself a Munshi!—a man of letters! Shame on you, I say, to allow yourself to be dictated to by a boy! Had I a beard like yours, I would cut it off for very shame."

"But, Jemadar—" he interposed.

"I tell you I can hear nothing. I know this will not end here—the fellow's prying should have been stopped at once. His suspicions will never rest. believe me, till he has found out the whole, and at any rate we shall lose money."

‘We shall, certainly’

“How much?”

“Two hundred rupees, I daresay.”

“So much! and the worst is that our trade is stopped.”

“I fear so; how can it be otherwise, as he observes the rates?”

“Could you get him to take the account himself, Munshi Sahib? We might find him out ourselves overcharging in a few days, and so they would fall back to us, and he would be ruined.”

“God knows!” sighed the Munshi, “at any rate it is worth trying, I will see to it. I am only afraid your turn will come next.”

“I’ll tell you what, Nasir, the thought is not to be borne. What! lose my monthly gains, without which this service is nothing to me! If there is a Kasim Ali Patel, there is at least a Sheikh Jaffar Jemadar. I tell you, man, I was not born to eat dirt at his hands, but he at mine.”

“May God grant it!” said the Munshi piously

“I tell you,” he continued, “I hated him from the first, because I found he would stand between me and the Khan. He abused me in hearing of all the camp, those words have gone forth among the men, and as I look in their faces I fancy that the remembrance of them comes into their heart, and that they exult over me. I tell you this is not to be borne, and I will have an exchange for it, or I will see why, do you understand?”

“I do.”

“And you must aid me.”

“Surely, Jemadar,” said the Munshi, as he left the room.

Jaffar Sahib thought a while after Nasir-ud-Din had gone, and then called to Madar, who waited without.

“Have you discovered anything more about the Khan’s wife, Madar?” he asked.

“Nothing, my lord, except that she is very beautiful”

"That you said before : nothing between her and this Kasim Ali ?"

"Nothing, except that he had seen her."

"That too you told me : does he see her now ?"

"God knows !" was the reply.

"It would be as well for us if he did."

"Shall your slave try to effect it ?"

"I have been thinking of it, Madar, you might contrive something. I tell you I hate that boy more and more. It is only this moment that I have heard from Nasir-ud-Din Munshi that his accounts have been suspected by him."

"Does the Khan know of it ?"

"No, not as yet, but there is no security for us, and there is no saying what may happen, for this boy holds a sword over us."

"I understand,—my lord will trust me ; and depend on it that, sooner or later, I will find a way of helping him to revenge these insults."

It was thus to screen their own iniquity, of which they were conscious, that these schemes were being undertaken against the peace of two people who had never harmed any of the plotters ; and in the course of our history we shall follow them to their conclusion.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW KASIM ALI MADE A FRIEND.

1.—The Prisoners.

After a few days' halt at Bangalore, for the purpose of preparing carriages for the removal of the English prisoners to the capital, and the collection of some of the revenue of the district, which was also to be taken thither, the morning arrived on which they were to set out, and each corps was drawn up in front of the Mysore gate of the fortress, while the Khan, attended by Kasim and some others, rode into it in order to receive the prisoners, and his last orders from the Governor.

While the Khan was engaged in his audience, Kasim rode hither and thither, observing with delight the enormous strength of the fortress,—the cannon, the arms and appearance of the disciplined garrison, and the few French soldiers and officers who were lounging about. He had never before seen a European, and their appearance, and their tight-fitting and ungraceful dress, inspired him with no very great idea of their prowess.

"Can these be the men," he thought, "to whom the Sultan trusts, instead of to the brave hearts and sturdy arms of the men of Islam? Well, it is strange that they should have the talents for such contrivances in war, as never enter into our hearts. Our only defence is a strong arm and a good sword and shield; and if we had not to fight against the English kafirs, we should not require these French. But here come the prisoners, I suppose," he added, as a few soldiers, horse and foot, with drawn swords, advanced from behind a wall near by, "the brave kafirs, as all call them, and hate them because they are so brave,

I confess I do, but only because they are the Sultan's enemies, and infidels into the bargain."

He was very curious to see these unhappy men, many of whom had been prisoners for over four years. In the Treaty of Mangalore, which ended what is known as the Second Mysore War in 1784, Tippu Sultan and the English had agreed to restore all prisoners. But Tippu had not kept his part of the bargain, and had detained many of his English captives in his fortresses without any hope of deliverance or possibility of communicating with their friends. Kasim had heard a great deal about the English, and had been taught to hate them as foreigners, national enemies, and men of an alien faith. But even his companions admitted that they were brave and skilful fighters. No wonder he watched for their coming with very eager curiosity. He expected to see a martial-looking people—warriors, tall and well-built, haughty in appearance, with an eye of fire and an arm of iron.

One by one the prisoners passed before him. Some were heavily chained, others walked free; but all showed in their faces the effects of long captivity. Melancholy and pale, many of them wasted by sickness, and by mental and bodily sufferings, they were shadows of what they had been. Their clothes hung in rags about them. Their steps were slow and weak, and those in chains with difficulty moved at all. None of them spoke, but many of them gazed about them, and up into the bright sky, as though they almost imagined they were free again. Following those on foot were several carried in small *doolies*, whose wasted bodies and ghastly looks told of their sickness and unfitness for travel.

Kasim had determined to hate these English in the same spirit as that of his companions. He had expected a feeling of triumph to arise in his heart when he saw many of them conquered and captives. But there was something so touching in the appearance of this sad procession of broken men, that he

felt nothing but pity. He could more easily have wept as he looked on it, than have joined in any expression of ill-will towards the prisoners.

As they advanced, a few boys who were near hooted at the captives, and abused them in foul language. This they did not appear to deign to notice. At last one boy, more bold than the rest, took up a stone and, with a savage oath, flung it against the prisoner nearest to him, and, having struck him, was greeted with a loud shout of joy by his companions.

Almost before he was aware of his own intention, and impelled by the wanton insult upon one so helpless, Kasim violently urged his horse across the open space up to the boy—who, having been successful in his first fling, had picked up another stone with a similar intention—and struck him severely several times with the whip he had in his hand. Screaming with pain, the boy ran off to a distance, and his companions, terrified, ran away at once.

Kasim could not resist speaking to the prisoner on whose behalf he had acted, and riding up to him, he hoped, not knowing whether he should be understood, that he was not hurt, adding that he had punished the young rascal who had thrown the stone.

The voice was one of kindness, and it was long since one like it had sounded in the young Englishman's ears.

"I am not hurt," he said, in good Hindustani; "and if I had been, an act of kindness such as yours would have amply repaid me for being hurt. Gallant soldier! you, it would seem, have not been taught as your countrymen to hate the English. Do not, however, speak to me an act of courtesy to one of us may perhaps bring disgrace upon you, and I would not have you receive that return for your kindness. May God protect you!"

They passed on, and Kasim remained in the same spot, gazing after him. His tall figure and proud air, his pale but handsome face and deeply-expressive

blue eyes,— such as Kasim had never seen before,—his fluent speech and manly tone,—above all, his last words, “May God protect you!” affected him powerfully.

“God protect you!” he repeated, “he believes then in God; how can he be an infidel? He said, ‘Alla Hafiz!’ and he spoke like a Mussulman; why should he be hated? I will see him again. Such a man is worth knowing, and I may be able to befriend him, surely he is a man of rank.”

But here his guesses were put an end to by Dilawar Ali, who, riding up to him, bade him accompany him, for the Khan was ready to proceed.

“Then you saw the kafirs,—may their end be perdition!” said the rough soldier.

“I did, brother,” returned Kasim, “miserable enough they look, and as if they could hardly move; how are they to travel?”

“There are covered carts for some, Mir Sahib, for they cannot bear the sun—*doolies* for others who are weak, and one or two, who are officers I hear are to be allowed an elephant,—but we shall see” And they rode rapidly through the gate of the fort.

“I thought you were an officer,” exclaimed Kasim; as he saw the Englishman with whom he had spoken mounting an elephant; “I thought he was more than one of the lower rank.”

“Why? what know you of him?”

“Nothing; but I spoke a few words to him, and it struck me he was a man of breeding and rank.”

“You had better beware, Kasim,” said his companion; “acts may be misinterpreted, and men like you never lack enemies.”

“Thank you for your advice,” said Kasim; “but I have done or said nothing that I am ashamed of” Kasim afterwards mentioned what he had done to the Khan, who could not help praising the young soldier’s action.

“Well done!” he cried, as Kasim related the incident, “I am glad the young rascal was

soundly whipped, he will know how to throw stones another time. I have fought against the Feringhis, and hate them; and yet, in such a case, I think I should have acted as you did, Kasim. Have you spoken to the Feringhi since?"

"No. Dilawar Ali seemed to think I had done wrong even in addressing him at all, but I should like much to speak with him; they say he is an officer of rank."

"I hear he has accepted the Sultan's offer of pardon, and that he will serve in the army, so at least the Governor of the Fort hoped, but we shall see. I doubt it, for the Feringhis are very obstinate, and Tippu has gained over none as yet by fair means."

"Then there are some in the army?"

"A few only who have become Muslims, but they are of the lowest grade, and he does not trust them. Go you then, when we have pitched the camp, and ask this Feringhi whether he will serve with us under the banner of the Lion of the Faith"

2.—*The Prisoner's Story.*

Kasim hardly needed to be asked to do this. He longed to have some friendly conversation with this English officer who had already excited such interest in his heart, and as soon as possible he went to the tents which had been pitched for the English prisoners, and sought out his new acquaintance.

"I little thought to have seen you again," said the officer (for so in truth he was), "and this visit is a proof to me that we are not enemies."

"No, certainly," said Kasim, "I have no enmity towards you."

"Perhaps then you can inform me and my poor comrades why we are being removed to the capital; we cannot understand it."

"You are to enter the service of the Sultan, we hear," replied Kasim; and from the flush of

indignation which rose in the other's pallid face, he could see how that idea was spurned by him.

"Never!" he cried, "never! and the Sultan knows this full well, months, nay years ago, he offered the alternative between this and death, and we spurned it with contempt. He will try us again, and receive the same answer, and then, perhaps, he may relieve us by death from this imprisonment, which is worse."

"Then it has been severe?"

"What! are you in the Sultan's service, and know not of our condition?"

"I am not in his service," said Kasim, "chance threw me into the society of the officer with whom I travel to the city. But I may enter it there, for my friend wishes me to do so."

"Do not enter it, I beseech you," cried the Englishman with sudden enthusiasm. "With so tender and gallant a heart you could not serve one who is a tiger in nature, one whose glory it is to be as savage and merciless as his namesake. Rather fly hence, bear these letters from me to Madras,—they will ensure you reward—service—anything you choose to ask. Take them, and the blessing of Heaven go with you! You will have succoured the unfortunate and given news of their existence to many who have long ago mourned us as dead."

"Feringhi!" said Kasim earnestly, "your gallant bearing has won my regard, and my friendly feeling will ever be towards you, but I abhor your race, and long for the time when I shall strike a blow against them in fair and open field. I enter the service of the Sultan at the city, whither we go, and this is answer enough to your request. Ask me not, therefore, to do what I should be ashamed of a week hence. I will speak to my commander about your letters, and doubt not that they will be forwarded."

"The only gleam of hope which has broken on me for years has again faded from my sight," said the young officer with deep melancholy. "I well know

that no letters will be forwarded from me. If your master, or he who will be so, has denied my existence, and broken his solemn treaties by keeping me and the other poor fellows who are with me prisoners, do you think he will allow me to write word that I am here?"

"And is it so?" said Kasim, "I believe you, your enemies even say that the English never lie. If it be possible to forward your letters, I will do it, and ask you for them; and now farewell! If Kasim Ali Patél can ever help you, ask for him when you are in trouble or danger, if he is near you, he will do his utmost in your behalf."

"I thank you, from my heart," said the officer. "Yours are the first kind words I have heard for years. But stay a moment; let me tell you who I am, so that, if the opportunity does arise, you may be able to let my friends know I am alive. My name is Herbert Compton. I was a captain in the army under General Matthews which the English sent from Bombay against your Sultan five years ago. We successfully climbed the Ghats, in spite of opposition, and took Bednur and other towns. But Tippu surprised us at Bednur, and after a desperate resistance, we were overpowered and had to surrender. I and many of my companions have been prisoners ever since."

"But how was it," asked Kasim, "that your General could be taken by surprise?"

"It was partly due to treachery," Compton replied. "On our way up the Ghats, a stranger, a Mussulman, joined the army, and for a certain sum of money guided us through the passes. At Bednur he seemed to acquire a great influence over the General, who came to trust him entirely. He professed to have deserted from Tippu, and lulled the General into security by constantly telling him that Tippu's army had not moved from Seringapatam. When Tippu actually arrived, this man (I remember his name was Jaffar Sahib) disappeared."

"What? Jaffar Sahib?" cried Kasim, in astonishment.

"You know him?" asked Compton.

"Why, he is Jemadar in the regiment I am travelling with now. So, he is not only a cruel bully, but a traitor too. Yes, I have reason to know him; and I fancy I have made him my enemy already."

"That is a pity, for he is a dangerous man."

"I do not fear him," said Kasim, proudly.

"Nevertheless, beware," replied the Englishman. "Poor Matthews' death must have been due to him."

"Your General?"

"Yes, your Sultan had got it into his head that we had concealed great treasure in Bednur, and when he found nothing he was furious. He, through his man Jaffar Sahib, tried in all kinds of ways to make Matthews say where his treasure was. As there was no treasure at all, of course Matthews could tell them nothing. In the end they poisoned him in the prison."

Kasim was shocked, but all he said was, "Were all your friends made prisoners?" "No," said Compton. "My chief friend was not with the army when the end came. He had been sent back to Bombay with despatches. I will give you his name so that if you should ever come across him you could give him news of me. He is Captain Philip Dalton. But perhaps he has gone back to England, and probably he and my family have long ago given me up for dead." And the prisoner sighed deeply.

Kasim promised again that he would do anything in his power to help him, for he felt strangely interested in him. He once more bade him farewell, and returned to the Khan.

"I thought it would be as you have related," said he to Kasim, as the latter repeated the conversation, "such a man is neither to be bribed nor threatened. Even their bitterest enemies must say of these unbelievers that they are faithful to death."

May God help him ! for I fear the Sultan's displeasure at this, his last rejection of rank and service, may be fatal to him and to the rest. Men's determinations, however, do not hold out always with the fear of death before their eyes—but we shall see. Whatever is written in his destiny he must accomplish."

"Amin !" said Kasim "I pray it may be favourable, for I honour him though he is a kafir

CHAPTER VII.

HOW AMEENA WAS WELCOMED HOME.

1.—*The Khan's Wrath.*

On the fifth day afterwards they reached the capital, Seringapatam—Kasim, with delight that his journey was ended, and that he should enter on his service without delay, the Khan, with mingled feelings of joy at returning to his master and his old companions in arms, and of vexation at the thought of his two wives, and the reception Ameena was sure to get from them.

Dismounting at the door of his house, where he was welcomed affectionately by his servants, the Khan delayed only while he washed his feet and face, before he passed on into the zenana.

The two ladies, who had expected his arrival, and who had employed a person abroad to inform them of it, were sitting at one end of the room, with their backs to the door. As he entered, a few slave girls who were standing about the apartment, made low *salaams* as he approached them, but the ladies neither rose nor took the slightest notice of him.

The Khan was surprised at seeing them together, for when he had left them they were bitter enemies, and he stopped suddenly in his approach. It was evident at once to him that they had heard of his marriage, and made common cause against him. He was justly enraged at this, and at the want of respect, nay insult, with which they now received him.

✓ After some angry words, Abdul Rahman Khan quitted his wives in no very pleasant mood. Tired by his long march, and without having tasted food since the morning, the insult he had received, their

disrespect and their abuse, were the more aggravating, and sank deeply into his heart. In his anger he had threatened to send them both to their homes. Although not a man of wrath habitually, or one indeed who could be easily excited, he was now in very truth enraged, and felt that he would have given worlds for any object on which he could have poured out the fury that possessed him.

The opportunity was not long wanting, for as he entered his outer tent, which was used by Kasim and the Munshi, he heard a violent quarrel in which Kasim's voice and that of the Munshi Nasir-ud-Din were very prominent.

"I tell you, you are a cheat and a rogue!" Kasim was exclaiming angrily, "this is the second time I have detected you, and therefore instantly alter these accounts and repay the money, or I will tell the Khan"

"I am no cheat nor rogue, any more than yourself," retorted the Munshi

"You shall rue this," cried Kasim; "you shall not escape me. I will beat you with a shoe" And a scuffle ensued.

"Hold!" exclaimed the Khan, who now rushed into the tent and parted them, "what is the meaning of all this?"

"*Hazúr!*" cried both at once.

"Do you speak, Nasir-ud-Din," said the Khan, "you are the older. What is the meaning of this disturbance? is this the bazaar? have you, an old man, no shame? Have you, too, lost all respect, Kasim Ali?"

"Judge if I have not cause to be angry, O Khan, at being called a rogue and a cheat by that boy," said the Munshi, "have I not cause to be enraged when my character is thus taken away?"

"Wherefore did you say this, Kasim, to a respectable man like him? these words are improper from such a youth as you are."

"Khan Sahib," said Kasim, "you have hitherto trusted me ; is it not so ? you have never doubted me ?"

"Never ; go on."

"God is my witness ! " he continued ; " I know no other motive in this but your welfare and prosperity, which first led me to inquire, in consequence of my suspicion. Since the Munshi has provoked it, and my lord is present, know then why I called him rogue and cheat. At Bangalore, by making notes of the prices in the bazaars, I detected him in overcharging for grain and forage to an immense amount in the week's account. I found the papers here, while my lord was absent, and I began looking over the items. I see the same thing again attempted. He swears he will not alter the papers, and I was angry, he called me base-born—"

"Yes, I heard that, Kasim, but say, have you proof of all this ? "

"Behold the daily memorandum I made of the rates, Khan, village after village, and day after day, written as I made the inquiry, the grain and forage was I know bought from the very people from whose lips I had the rates. Call them if you like—they are the bazaar merchants."

"And so you would have cheated me, Nasir-ud-Din," said the Khan, his anger rising rapidly and looking wrathfully at the trembling Munshi, "you, who owe me so much, to cheat me ! Have I deserved this ? To what amount was the fraud, Kasim ? "

"A hundred rupees or more, Khan, at least, even upon this week's account, I could not tell exactly without making up the whole difference."

"I doubt it not, I doubt it not, and if this for one week, what for the whole time since you have had this place—the sole control of my houses' expenditure ! what—"

"My lord ! my lord ! " cried the Munshi, "be not so angry, your slave is terrified—he dares not speak ; he has not cheated, he has never given a false account"

But his looks belied his words. He stood a convicted rogue, even while he tried thus weakly to assert his innocence ; for he trembled much, and his lips were blue from terror.

"We will soon see that," said the Khan deliberately. "Go!" he said to Daúd, who stood by, "bring two grooms with whips ; let us see whether they cannot bring this worthy man to a very different opinion."

It was not needed, however. The Munshi, terrified almost to speechlessness, threw himself on the ground at the Khan's feet.

"I will pay! I will pay all!" he cried, "I confess my false accounts. Do with me what you will, but oh! save my character, I am a respectable man."

"Good!" said the Khan, "all of you who are present hear that he has confessed himself a thief before he was touched, and that he says he is a respectable man. You will bear me witness in this—a respectable man!"

All answered that they would. "Take him then," he said to Daúd and some of the Farashes who stood near, "take him from my sight, put him on an ass, with his face to the tail, blacken his face, and show him in the bazaar. If any one recognises the *respectable* Nasir-ud-Din, and asks after his health, say that he is taking the air by my order, for having cheated me. Enough—begone!"

The order did not need repetition. Amidst his cries and protestations against the sudden sentence, the Munshi was carried off; and in a few minutes, his face blackened, and set on an ass with his face to the tail, he was the sport of the idlers and vagabonds in the camp.

Having vented his long pent-up rage, the Khan soon cooled down into his usual pleasant manner and begged Kasim to explain to him minutely the whole of the Munshi's system of false accounts. This Kasim did clearly, and showed him how much cause there was to suspect that his cheating must have been going on for months, nay years past, indeed,

it was but too clear that the Khan had been defrauded of large sums, and that the Munshi's gains must have been enormous.

"And this might have gone on for ever, Kasim, but for you," said the Khan. "Well you have added another to the very good reasons I already have for aiding you. The Sultan's reception is to take place to-morrow evening, for which get your best clothes ready, or stay—I have a better thought, wait here, and I will return instantly." He did so, and brought with him a superb suit of cloth-of-gold, quite new.

"There," he said, "take that, Kasim, and wear it to-morrow, it is the best cloth-of-gold of Aurungabad, and was made for one of my marriage-dresses. Nay, no words, for you have saved me far more than the cost of it in the detection of yon scoundrel."

2.—*The Khan's Wives.*

After the Khan had left his two wives in anger, they had hurriedly consulted together as to what was the best thing to do; for they were both seriously alarmed at his threat to send them to their homes. They finally decided to send a servant and ask the mother of Kummoo-bee, the younger wife, to come and see them, and agreed to follow her advice. This lady was the wife of the head Kazi, or judge, of Seringapatam, a wealthy but corrupt man, of good family. She herself was the daughter of a poor gentleman of long descent. She inherited all her father's pride of birth, and had married her daughter to Abdul Rahman Khan only because of his rank and wealth, for she despised his low origin.

As the ladies waited, they heard the sound of bearers, and in a few moments the jingle of the anklets and heavy tread of the old lady, as she came along the open verandah of the court which led to their apartment. They rose to welcome her, and the next moment she entered, and advanced towards

her daughter. She almost started as she saw the Khan's other wife, Hoormut, knowing that they had been enemies; but returning her *salaam* very courteously, she proceeded to take the evil from her daughter by cracking her knuckles over her. Having done this, and embraced, she was led to the *masnad*, and being seated thereon, and her daughter's *hooka* given to her, she drew a long breath as if she had exerted herself very much. Then looking from one to the other, she asked what they had to say to her.

"We have news for you, mother," said Kummoo-bee, pettishly.

"Ay, news, rare news!" added the other, who seemed as spiteful as suppressed anger could make her.

"What!" said the old lady, looking from one to the other, "wonderful news? By your souls, tell me what news. what has happened that I know not of?"

"Of the Khan," said Kummoo, edging nearer to her mother.

"Ay, listen," said the other, "it is worth hearing."

"Of the Khan? most wonderful! Is he dead?—have you all his money?"

"No!" cried Kummoo passionately, "it would be well for us and him if he were dead. Dead! no, he is returned, and well."

"Well!" said the old lady, apparently relieved, "there is nothing very wonderful in this—nothing particular to marvel at, that I see. If I had known I was to have been called from home only to hear this, I can tell you, you would have waited long. I had a thousand things to do when Sozun came for me. I was going to cook a dish, and then I had the woman with bangles for my arms, and then the silversmith was coming and—"

"How shall I tell this shame?" cried her daughter, interrupting her, "how shall I utter the words, to make it fit for you to hear or my tongue to utter? Alas! mother, he has returned, and brought a woman with him."

"What! a woman? you did not say a woman? Another wife?" cried the old lady angrily.

"So he says, mother," cried Hoormut, "another wife. He dared not write this to either of us; he dared not tell us how he had misused us, how he had cheated us; he dared not tell us this; and we heard it only from my cousin, who discovered it at Nandidúg, and wrote to the family."

"And what is more," cried Kummoo, "he swore if we did not receive her kindly, he would send us both home to our parents, and let them support us, for he would not."

"So he threatened that, did he? And what said you?" added the old lady, more calmly; for, in truth, the sudden vision of her daughter's return to her house, was not by any means agreeable.

"Mother, we could say nothing, for he left us, and we have sent for you to ask your advice as to what we should do," said Kummoo, wiping her eyes with the end of her scarf.

"Patience, my child, patience!" said the old lady, soothingly. "We will be revenged. I who am your mother say this, on him and her we will have our exchange for this, if charms or spells, or, what is better, women's wit, can effect this."

"Quickly then, mother, by your soul! devise something. I shall live in misery till you do, and we will aid you. Is it not so, sister?"

"I promise to do all you wish of me," returned Hoormut; "I am in your hands. Alas! I have now no mother whom I can consult; you are my only mother, lady!" And she began to sob.

"Do not cry, daughter," said the dame, rising majestically; "we shall prosper yet. I go to think over the matter and consult my faithful old servant. She is wise, and to her I am indebted for many a charm, without which it would have fared ill with me. I will send her to-morrow, and you can tell her what happened when he brought her, and what she is like." And so saying, she left them.

"Since we are to see her," said Kummoo, who had been hiding her vexation by looking out of the window to watch her mother's departure, "and to behold her triumph over us, we must only eat our own vexation, and make the best of the matter. Let us prepare the room—the Khan has ordered the repast—we will get some garlands and salute them. If we are not to be revenged at once by insulting them both, at least let us pretend civility, which may blind them to our purposes."

And so they did. A clean covering was put upon the *masnad*, the crimson velvet pillows of state occasions laid upon it. All the slaves were ordered to put on clean clothes; and they themselves, dressed in their most sumptuous apparel and adorned with all their jewels, were seated about the time of evening in the room which on that morning had been the scene of the quarrel.

Trembling, but cheered by the Khan to the utmost of his power, the gentle Ameena accompanied him about dusk to his abode in the Fort. The palankin was set down in the courtyard, and the bearers having retired, she tried to get out of it, but could hardly support her trembling limbs. One or two of the women servants, however, kindly assisted her, and a cup of cool water refreshed her. The Khan, too, had now arrived, and veiling herself closely, she followed him into the apartment which had been prepared.

The Khan had been uncertain what would happen until he reached the room; but he had determined, if necessary, to carry his threat into execution. A glance, however, assured him that all was right. The ladies rose courteously, made them low *salaams* and advanced to meet them, and as he led forward the shrinking girl, they took her kindly by the hand with many warm welcomes and blessings, and in spite of her protests, seated her upon the place of honour and themselves at her feet. This done, a slave advanced with a tray of garlands, one of which

they hung around her neck, while they again *salam*-*ed* to her, and the slaves one by one did the same. The Khan, too, underwent these ceremonies with delight, for he had little expected such a greeting.

The ladies at last were seated, and Kummoo said, "Let us, I pray you, sister, see the face of which we have heard so much, unveil, I beseech you, that we may look on our new sister."

"It is not worth seeing," said the timid girl, throwing back the end of her scarf, "nevertheless your kindness and welcome is so great that I cannot refuse you."

"Ah!" cried one and all, "how beautiful!" for they were really struck with her appearance, and could not restrain their sincere expression of admiration at her loveliness. "The Khan has good taste." ✓

Kummoo, the principal speaker, and the youngest of the two wives, was beautiful too; but her flashing eyes, full person, and rather dark skin, could not be compared with the gentle beauty, exquisite though small proportions, and fair skin of Ameena. And the Khan's eye, which wandered from one to the other for a few moments, rested at last on Ameena with a look so full of admiration, that it did not—could not—escape Kummoo's notice. She, of course, said nothing, but the venom of her heart arose with more bitterness than ever.

"Ay, she is fair, Kummoo-bee," said the Khan, "and gentle as she is fair. I am thankful that you seem already to love her as a sister. You will be friends and sisters in truth, when you know each other better."

"Please God!" said Kummoo-bee reverently, "the Khanum (may her house be honoured!) is welcome. How say you, Hoormut? have you no welcome for the lady?"

"By your head and eyes, you speak well, sister. If the love of such an unknown and unworthy person as I am be worth anything, the Khanum is welcome to it."

"I am grateful," said Ameena, "you are more than kind to one who had no claim on you, but I am alone here, and my people are far distant—very far. Your love will be precious to me during the years Allah may cast our lots together."

There was something very touching in her sad and gentle tone; and as the old Khan's heart had been moved by his wives' unexpected kindness, he well nigh cried aloud.

"Ameena!" he said, "Ameena! God, who hears you say these words of affection, will give you grace to abide by them."

"But come," said Kummoo, who thought these protestations of love going rather too far, "we have some of our singers for you to hear, lady—we of the south call them good, but we hear rare things of the singers of Hyderabad. Call them in," she added to an attendant.

They came in, and, having tuned their instruments, began one of the usual songs of congratulation. It was followed by others, while the party sat and conversed cheerily on the adventures of the journey. An ample meal was shortly after spread, and at the end of the evening Ameena retired to her new apartments, believing, in her simplicity and goodness, that her sister-wives loved her in real truth. If the Khan felt any of his own doubts remaining, he did not seek to disturb Ameena's security by telling her of them, and for the first time since she had heard of the existence of her sister-wives, Ameena felt happy.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW TIPPU SULTAN HELD A DURBAR.

1.—The Ride to the Palace.

Kasim Ali followed the Khan's advice, and prepared himself most carefully for the Sultan's Durbar. He put on the splendid cloth-of-gold suit the Khan had given him, which fitted him perfectly. Around his head was a green turban with gold stripes—a sign of his descent as a Syud. Under his chin, and tied on the top of his head, he wore a Benares handkerchief of purple and silver, the gift of his mother. His waist was girded with a crimson muslin scarf, with gold ends nearly a foot long hanging down at one side. A pair of tight-fitting trousers of yellow satin striped with crimson completed his costume.

His weapons were his father's sword fastened to a gold belt across his shoulder—two or three daggers with richly ornamented handles stuck in his girdle—and his shield, hung at his back.

Thus dressed and armed he mounted Yakut, the fine horse which the Khan had given him, and rode off to his patron's house. And as he rode through the crowded streets, many eyes were turned towards him in admiration of his gallant and martial appearance.

Passing through the gateway, he rode on into the Fort, and crossed a large open space, where cannon-balls in heaps, cannon mounted on carriages, and soldiers moving in all directions showed how well the Fort was defended. Beyond this he entered the bazaar—long streets of goodly houses, the lower parts of which were shops, where all sorts of grain, rich clothes, tobacco, brass pots, and arms of all kinds, were exposed for sale.

As he passed on, the tall minarets of the mosque built by Haidar Ali Khan towered above him, which, pierced from top to bottom with pigeon-holes, after the manner of those in Arabia, were surrounded by thousands of pigeons of all colours and kinds, wheeling hither and thither in the air in immense flocks, whilst others sat quietly cooing in the niches. Soon afterwards he came out from the narrow street into the square, the Fateh Maidan, "or plain of victory," on one side of which was the long line of the Sultan's palace, a line of dead wall with many windows, whose closed shutters showed they belonged to the zenana. Around the gate were many guards, dressed in the striped tiger-skin pattern calico of Tipu's bodyguard of regular infantry, mingled with the richer dresses and armour of the irregular troops. In the centre of the square were a number of men being drilled, whose movements, with the words of command, were quite new to Kasim, and filled him with great admiration. At the other side of the square the venerable forms of the ancient Hindu temples reared their huge conical and richly ornamented roofs, and around their massy gates and in the courts lounged many well-fed Brahmins with closely shaven and shining head, and body naked to the waist—priests of the god whose worship was not forbidden by the ruler of the Fort.

The Khan's house was not far from the temple, in one of the chief streets, and having announced his arrival to the gate-keeper, Kasim continued riding up and down before it till the Khan should come forth to accompany him.

In a short time he heard the cheerful voice of the Khan, who, fully armed, was splendidly dressed in a suit of bright chain-armour over a tunic of cloth-of-gold; a highly-polished steel cap glittered on his head, his long straight sword was suspended in an embroidered belt, and his waist was girded by a green and gold scarf similar to that Kasim wore. He greeted Kasim heartily.

"You are no disgrace to me, and the suit becomes you. So now let us see you make my Yakut bound a little"

As Kasim complied with his request, the delight of the Khan and his retainers, who had now assembled, was extreme, and cries of "*Shabash! shabash!*" rewarded his exertions. Indeed Kasim's horsemanship, like that of most Dekhanis, was perfect, and he sat his excited horse with the ease and grace of one who was completely at home upon his back; in spite of its extreme spirit and violence.

The Khan now called to him to start, and the spearmen and running footmen and grooms having arranged themselves in front, they set forward at a quick pace, followed by the Khan's retainers, who were almost as well mounted, though not so richly clothed, as themselves. Those in front shouted the Khan's titles, clearing the way often with rude blows of the heavy spear-shafts.

They retraced Kasim's steps through the bazaars, where the many *salaams* and compliments which greeted them, showed how greatly the Khan was respected, and the various cries of the Fakirs, who appealed to him by name as they begged for alms, and mentioned many of his valiant acts, proved how well his brave deeds were known to all.

When they came out of the Fort, instead of taking the road to the right, which led to the camp, they struck off to the left, and after a few minutes' ride came to the gate of the garden of the Duria-i-Daulat, or Sea of Wealth, by the river side, where for the day, the Sultan held his court.

This palace, which had been built by his father Haidai Ali, many years before, stood in the centre of a garden of great beauty, which, from the richness of the soil and plentiful supply of water brought from the river by a deep water-course, flourished in the utmost luxuriance. Large trees, mango and tamarind, walnut, and the sweet-scented champak, with many other forest kinds, and large clumps of

feathery bamboos, overshadowed the broad walks and long green alleys, and in the hottest weather formed a cool shade, while the coolness was increased by the constant irrigation.

Passing through the gate, the Khan and Kasim rode down the avenue, at the end of which was the palace. The building was two storeys high, the lower of which was occupied by kitchens, halls for servants, and long corridors. The upper contained the rooms of state. A projecting roof, which was supported by carved wooden pillars, formed a deep verandah, which was occupied by a crowd of persons—servants, and people who attended either with petitions or upon business.

They dismounted, and as they drew near to the palace, the Khan pointed out to Kasim the curious paintings which covered its wall, representing Haidar Ali's battles and victories. Then he led the way by one side of the building to a flight of broad stairs under the cover of a verandah, and they ascended amidst the crowd of courtiers and military officers who were thronging to the Durbar; for proclamation was being made as they waited without, and the cries of the Chobdars, or macebearers, announced to all that the Sultan had taken his seat. The head of the stairs opened at once in the hall of audience, so that when they reached the top the scene burst fully upon them. To the Khan there was nothing new in it; but to Kasim, who had never seen anything grander than his own village, or at most the town of Adoni, the effect was dazzling and overpowering.

2.—*The Durbar.*

The room was large, but low in its proportions. The walls were of that beautiful stucco which is only to be seen in perfection in the south of India, and which, from its high polish and whiteness, so nearly resembles the purest marble. This was wrought into most elaborate designs. The windows were without

frames, and were open to the garden, which in all its beauty and luxuriance could be seen through them, and they admitted the cool breeze to play through the room, which otherwise, from its crowded state, would have been very hot. Heavy purdahs, or gilded curtains of crimson cloth, hung above them, which could be let down so as to shut out the air completely if required. The ceiling was covered with patterns of stucco. The floor was covered with rich carpets to about one half of its length, where commenced a white muslin cloth, on which none dared to venture but those whose rank or station about the monarch entitled them to that honour.

At the farther end of the room was a raised dais, or platform, which was covered, like the floor, with white muslin; but in the centre of it was a square carpet of rich purple velvet, surrounded with soft cushions, also of velvet, upon which sat Tippu, the pride and the dread of those by whom he was surrounded.

He was dressed with marked plainness in white muslin, and would not have been taken for the Sultan by a stranger, except from the place he occupied, and his large and peculiarly-formed turban.

On either side of him knelt two fair and rosy-faced boys, grandly dressed,—the children of European captives—who waved *chowries* over his head to drive away the flies.

On each side of the dais, in semi-circles, sat the officers of state and of the army, in their various costumes, leaving an open space in the centre through which those passed who desired to present their *nazrs*, or offerings, to the Sultan.

Some French officers were there in glittering uniforms, but their tight-fitting clothes, and bare heads, looked mean amidst the turbaned heads, and more graceful costumes of the courtiers. Behind all were a number of the royal bodyguard, splendidly dressed, and aimed to the teeth.

The Sultan was stout and of middle height, and his face was darker than those of most who surrounded him. His eyes were full and prominent, but restless and suspicious, his nose was small and straight. His lips seemed to be always sneering. His eyebrows and moustaches were trimmed most carefully into arched lines, and he wore no beard. In his hand there was a large rosary of pearls and emeralds, which he constantly kept counting with the fingers of his right hand. Before him lay a straight sword of small size, the hilt of which was inlaid with gold and blue turquoise stones, and a gold writing case, containing some reed pens, ink and paper, lay near his left hand.

The ceremony of presentation went on rapidly. Almost all offered their *nazrs* of gold or silver, which the Sultan took, and placed beside him until there was a goodly heap. Kasim, at the distance he then was, could catch nothing of the conversation which was going on, for in spite of the loud cries of "*Khámosh ! Khámosh !*" (silence!) from the attendants, there was more noise in the assembly than he thought befitting the presence of the Sultan. After waiting some little time, and having advanced nearer and nearer to the *masnad*, the Khan, who in truth was a remarkable figure, even among that richly-dressed assembly, being the only one who wore armour, caught the eye of the Sultan. As the Sultan's eye met his, the Khan advanced, and bidding Kasim remain where he was till he should be called, he bowed and presented with the handle of his sword upon an embroidered handkerchief, his *nazr* of five gold mohurs, which the Sultan received most graciously.

"We welcome you back, Khan Sahib, most heartily," said the Sultan; "and it is pleasant in our eyes to see an old friend return in health. But you are thin, friend, from the effects of the journey perhaps. Praise be to Allah! his servant, unworthy of the honour, has been given the power of dreams

such as no one else has enjoyed since the days of the Prophet, on whose memory be peace! We dreamed last night that we should see the face of an old friend, and receive a new servant, who should eclipse all the young men of our court in gallant bearing, bravery, and intelligence."

As he looked around when he had said this, all those within hearing cried, "Amin! Amin! who is favoured of Allah like unto the Sultan? may he live a hundred years! Whose knowledge is equal to his?"

"Ay," he continued, "behold it has come true. Here has the Khan, as it were, dropped from the clouds, and with him a young man, who is one whose bravery is great. Bring him forward, O Khan, that our fortunate glance may rest on him."

"May I be your sacrifice, *Hasrût*!" said the Khan, "he is unworthy the honour; nevertheless, I offer him unto your service, and can answer that he has as stout an arm and as brave a heart as he looks to have. I have seen both tried, in circumstances of great peril to myself."

"Good!" said the Sultan, before whom Kasim had bowed three times, and now stood with folded hands. "Good! by the Prophet, a fine youth! There is truth on his forehead—his destiny is good."

"Who can discern character like the Sultan?" cried several, "behold all things, even men's hearts, are open to him."

"He has lucky marks about his face, only known to us," continued the Sultan, "and the planets are favourable to-day. He is a Syud too; his services will therefore be good, and beneficial to himself and us."

"Praise to God!" cried the court in ecstasy; "what wisdom! what penetration! what gracious words! they should be written in a book."

"Will you take service, youth?" he continued to Kasim; "are you willing to strike a blow for the Lion of the Faith?"

"*Hasrūt* ! your slave is willing to the death," cried Kasim enthusiastically ; "prove him ; he will not be unworthy of such exalted pationage."

"You shall be tried ere long, fear not. Enrol him," he continued to a Munshi ; "let his pay be fifty rupees with allowance for a horse , have you one ?"

"The Khan's generosity has already furnished me with one," said Kasim.

"Good ! your business shall be to attend my person, and our friend the Khan will tell you of your duties. Enough ! you have your dismissal "

"I beg to represent that the Khan escorted some English prisoners from Bangalore," said an officer who was sitting near the Sultan "would Your Highness like—"

"True, true !" replied the Sultan ; "we had forgotten that , " and he added, as the expression of his countenance changed, "Command silence, and let them be brought into the presence "

CHAPTER IX.

HOW A PRISONER DEFIED THE SULTAN.

1.—A Brave Deed.

At the Sultan's words, the busy tongues ceased directly, and no voice was heard except that of Tippu himself asking from the secretaries whether any despatches had come with the prisoners from Bangalore.

"*Hasrât!*" said the Khan, again advancing, "they are with your slave, who craves pardon that in the confusion of presenting his *nazr*, he forgot to deliver them." And he laid the packets at the Sultan's feet, who instantly tore open the envelope, and selecting one of the enclosures directed to himself, began to read it with great attention.

"This speaks well of the prisoners," he said at length to the officer who sat near him, "the Governor of Bangalore writes that one of them, a captain, is a man of knowledge, well versed in the science of war and tactics; that he understands fortification and gunnery, so that he is worthy of being offered our favour. Therefore, though we need no instruction in these matters,—thanks be to Allah, who has implanted a natural knowledge of them in our heart, which is not surpassed by any of the Feringhis—"

And all around interrupting him, cried "Amin! Amin!"

"In the name of God!" he continued, "we will offer him life and service. If he accept it, well, if not, I will send him to hell, where thousands of his accursed race await his coming—are not these good words?"

"Excellent—excellent words! They are not worthy to live!" cried several, "the Sultan's clemency is great!"

As this ceased, the tramp of many feet was heard on the wooden staircase, and as the noise approached nearer, Kasim, who had been watching the Sultan with intense interest, could see that he was far from being at ease. He fidgeted upon his *masnad*, the rosary passed twice as fast as usual through his fingers, his eyes winked sharply, and he stroked his moustache from time to time, either with exultation or inquietude, Kasim could not distinguish which. At length the prisoners reached the head of the stairs, and their escort appeared to wait there for commands.

"Bid the officer advance," said the Sultan, "the rest may be withdrawn for the present, we will send for them when this man is disposed of."

The order was obeyed, and all were withdrawn but one, who, being ordered to come forward through the lane which was opened for him to the foot of the *masnad*, advanced slowly, but with erect and manly gait and proud bearing, near to where the Sultan sat. "*Salaam* to the light of the world, to the sun of Islam! Perform your obeisance here, and prostrate yourself on the ground," said a Chobdar who accompanied the prisoner.

"I will salute him as I would salute my own monarch," said the prisoner, in a voice audible to all, and in good Hindustani, but spoken with rather a foreign pronunciation, and still advancing, he had placed one foot upon the white cloth which has been already mentioned.

"Kafir!" cried the Chobdar, striking him, "son of perdition, keep back! dare not to advance a step beyond the carpet, prostrate yourself to the Sultan, and beg his mercy."

The Englishman turned in an instant, at the blow he had received, and raised his arm to strike again, the Sultan saw the action and spoke.

"Hold!" he cried, "do not strike, O Feringhi, and do some of you seize that officious rascal, and give him ten blows upon his back with a cane."

The fellow was seized and hustled out, while the Englishman continued standing where he had been arrested.

"Advance!" cried the Sultan.

Some of those near tried to persuade him not to allow the Englishman to approach.

"Pah!" he exclaimed, "I have caused the deaths of too many with arms in their hands, to fear this unarmed wretch. Advance, then, that we may speak with you conveniently, be not afraid, we will do you no harm."

"I fear you not, O Sultan," said Herbert Compton (for so in very truth it was), advancing, and bowing stiffly yet respectfully, "I fear you not; what can you do to me that I should fear you?"

"I could order you to be put to death this instant," said the Sultan sharply; while others cried out fiercely that the speech was insolent, and reviled him.

Herbert looked round him proudly, and many a one among the crowd of flatterers quailed as his clear blue eyes rested on them. "I am not insolent!" he exclaimed; "if my speech is plain and honest, take you a lesson from it, cowards! who could insult one so helpless as I am," and he drew himself up to his full height and folded his arms, awaiting what the Sultan should say to him. His dress was mean, of the coarsest white cotton cloth of the country, his head was bare, and so were his feet, but in spite of this, there was a dignity in his appearance which inspired involuntary respect, nay awe, in many.

"Peace!" cried the Sultan, "we have not sent for you, O Feringhi, to hear your bold speech, but to advise you as one who is a friend to you, and has a true interest in your welfare."

"Do you understand the condescending speech of the Sultan, or shall one of the Frenchmen interpret it for thee?" asked one of the Munshis officiously.

"Peace!" again cried the Sultan, "he understands me well enough, if he does not, he will say so. And now, Captain Compton, since thus, it is written, is thy

name, we have sent for you from the Fort, not as a common criminal and one whose end is perdition, but with honour. We had you seated on an elephant, lodged in a good tent, supplied with excellent food. Now our good friend the Governor writes to us that, weary of confinement, and induced by a sense of the obligations you and your companions are under to me, you are in a frame of mind to accept our offers of taking you into our service, of raising you to rank, of admitting you to share—”

“Stop!” cried Herbert suddenly, while, as he spoke, the Sultan fairly started at the suddenness of the interruption. “Stop! when we are on equal terms you can offer me service; it is a mockery to tempt me with promises you would not fulfil.”

“By the gracious Allah and his Prophet, I would,” cried the Sultan eagerly “say then, will you serve me? you shall have rank, power, wealth.”

“I am in your hands, a helpless captive, O Sultan,” replied Herbert, “and therefore I cannot but hear whatever you choose to say to me but if you are a man and a soldier, insult me no more with such words. Nay, be not impatient, but listen. When Matthews was poisoned by your order,—nay, start not! you know well it is the truth,—I was given the choice of life, and your service, or death upon refusal,—I chose death. Year after year I have seen those die around me whom I loved, I have courted death by refusal of your base and dishonourable offers you have not dared to destroy me. My life, a miserable one to me, is now of no value, those whom I love in my own land have long mourned me as dead. It is well that it is so—I am honoured in death. Alive, and in your service, I should be dead to them, but dishonoured therefore I prefer death. I ask it from you as a favour, I have no wish to live. bid yonder fellow strike my head from my body before your eyes. As you love to look on blood, you will see how a man, and an Englishman, can bear death. Strike! I defy you”

"Beat him on the mouth with a shoe!" roared many voices; "let him die!" While scowling looks and threatening gestures met him on all sides.

"Peace!" exclaimed the Sultan, who, seeing that his words were not heard amidst the hubbub, rose from his seat and commanded silence. "Peace!" he cried, when the assembly was still once more, "if any one disturbs this conference by word or deed, I will disgrace him." And then turning to Herbert, who with glowing cheek and glistening eye stood awaiting what he thought would be his doom. "Fool, O fool!" he cried, "are you mad? Will you be a fool? Your race mourn you as dead; there is a new life open to you, a life of honourable service, of rank and wealth. Once more, will you refuse the golden path which your own destiny has opened to you? Let me not hear your answer now. Go! you shall be lodged well, fed from my own table, in three days I will again hear your decision."

"Were it three years, my answer would be the same," cried Herbert, whose chest heaved with excitement and who with some difficulty had heard out the Sultan's address. "I defy you! I spurn your base and dishonourable offers, with indignation which I have not words to express. When you can give me back the murdered Matthews, whose blood is on your head—when you can restore to life those whom you have murdered, thrown from rocks, strangled—when you can do this, I will serve you."

Fifty swords flashed from their scabbards, and many were uplifted to strike the daring and reckless speaker, when Kasim, who had been listening with the most intense interest, and remembering his promise of succour, while he felt the high sense of honour which prompted the Englishman's defiance of the Sultan, rushed forward, and with uplifted arm stayed the descent of the weapons.

"Hold!" he exclaimed, with the utmost power of his strong voice,—“are you men? are you soldiers?"

to cut down a man unarmed, and who is helpless as a woman? Have you no regard for honour, or for truth, when you hear it spoken?"

"Rash and foolish youth!" cried the Sultan, "is this your first act of service? An act of disrespect and rebellion! And yet I thank you for one thing—though he whom you have saved will curse you for it—I thank you for his life, which I have now to torture." •

"Your death, kafi Feringhi," he continued to Herbert, "under the swords of the Muslims would have been sweet and that of a soldier—it shall now be a bitter one. Away with him to the Drúg, no matter how he is carried thither, the meanest pony, the meanest *dooly* is enough. Here, do you, Jaffar Sahib, see this done; travel night and day till it is accomplished—see him and his vile companions, or such of them as will now dare to refuse my offers, flung from the rock by Kabál Drúg, and hasten back to report that they are dead. Begone!"

"Farewell, brave friend," said Herbert to Kasim as they laid hold on him roughly, and with violent abuse urged his departure, "if we meet not again on earth, there is a higher and a better world, where men of all creeds will meet. Farewell!"

"Say, have I not kept my promise to you?" cried Kasim passionately, for he too was held by the Khan and others.

"You have," was the reply "May God reward your intentions—" His last words were lost in the exclamations, threats, and abuse of those who dragged him away.

2.—Kasim's Punishment.

The Sultan re-seated himself on the *masnad*, and the assembly was after a short while once more stilled. No one spoke, no one dared to interrupt the current of the monarch's thoughts, whatever they might be

All had their eyes fixed upon Kasim, who, held by the Khan and another, waited expecting his doom in silence, but not with dread. Yet his thoughts were in a whirl of excitement, and the remembrance of his mother, the Englishman, and the acts of his own life, flashed through his mind. But Kasim's earnest gaze was all the while fixed upon the monarch, who, for a few moments was absorbed in a reverie. But on a sudden he raised his eyes, and they met those of Kasim, who, still held by the Khan, stood close to him.

"O unfortunate," he exclaimed, "what have you done? Do you know the peril of coming between the tiger and his prey? Do you know that I have but to speak, and, before you could say your belief, your young blood would moisten the grass yonder? Do you know this, and yet did you dare to brave me? Speak, slave! you are not a spy of the English, that you went mad in behalf of the wretch we have doomed to death?"

"May I be your sacrifice, O Sultan!" cried Kasim, joining his hands and addressing Tippu, "I am no spy—I am not faithless—you have the power to strike my head from my body—bid it be done; your slave is ready to die."

"Then why did you behave thus?" said Tippu.

"The Englishman was helpless—he was unarmed—he was my friend—for I rescued him from insult at Bangalore," replied Kasim; "he told me his history and I grieved for him: he besought me not to enter your service, O Sultan, but to join his race. I was free to have done so, but I despised them, and longed to fight against them under the banner of the Lion of Islam. I swore to befriend him, however, if ever I could, the time came sooner than I expected, and in an unlooked-for form, and I would have been faithless, craven, and vile, had I failed him when he could not strike a blow in his own defence. This is the truth, O Sultan! punish me if you will—I am your slave."

"Unhappy boy," said the Khan to him in a whisper, "you have spoken too boldly. God help you, for there is no hope for you that I can see. See, he speaks to you."

"Kasim Ali," said the Sultan. "If one of these who know me had dared to do what you have done, I would have destroyed him; if any one had dared to have spoken as boldly as you have done, I would have disgraced him for disrespect. You are young—you are brave; you have truth on your forehead and in your words, and we love it. Go! you are pardoned—and yet for warning's sake you must suffer punishment, lest the example should spread in our army. We had your pay written down at fifty rupees—it shall be forty; you were to be near my person—you shall serve under the Khan, as he may think fit. If you are valiant, we shall hear of you with pleasure and reward you; and remember our eyes, which are as all-seeing as those of the angels, will ever be fixed upon you. Remember this, and tremble while you think upon it!"

Kasim saluted the monarch profoundly and drew back; he had been rebuked, but mildly, and the honest face of the Khan was once more overjoyed.

"Your destiny is great," he whispered; "now had I, or any one else here, got by any accident into such a scrape, we should have been heavily fined, degraded, and God only knows what else; but you have come off triumphant, and as for the loss of the money, you need not mind. God grant, too, there may soon be an opportunity of winning fame. We will yet fight together."

Just then the loud cries of "Silence! Silence!" again resounded through the hall, and the Sultan once more spoke.

"Let all the departments of the army," he said, "be ready to move at the shortest notice. I have news that the Nairs (may they be accursed!) have again taken up arms and are giving trouble to our troops. And now, Abdul Rahman Khan," he added,

“what news have you for us from the court of Nizam Ali Khan?”

The Khan's journey to Hyderabad had not been entirely on private business. He had been requested by Tippu to find out, while he was there, which side the Nizam was likely to take in Indian politics. In reply to the Sultan's questions he said, “Shall I speak it out, protector of the universe, or will you hear it privately?”

“Here, friend, here,” said Tippu; “what secrets have I that my friends around me should not know? In our Government all is as open as daylight.”

Amidst the murmur of applause which this speech produced, the Khan proceeded.

“The Nizam Ali Khan,” he said, “is favourable to us—entirely favourable. He has almost quarrelled with the English, and I believe he would declare war on them to-morrow if he was sure of the feeling of our Government. But there will be more proof than my poor words, for I heard from good authority that the Nizam was about to send an ambassador, a man of tact and knowledge, who will explain all his wishes fully.

“An ambassador! say you Khan?” cried Tippu. “Rare news, he is then in earnest, and with his aid what may not be done? He can bring a lakh of men—cavalry too—into the field, and he has infantry besides. God grant he may come soon! Let the Durbar be closed!” he cried suddenly and abruptly after a short silence, and rising, he retired into one of the smaller rooms, where, alone, he meditated over those wild schemes of conquest which were in the end his ruin.

CHAPTER X.

HOW AN ENGLISHMAN FACED DEATH.

1.—The Fatal Rock.

Dragged away by his merciless guards,—pushed, struck, spat upon and jeered at by the crowd outside the palace hall—Herbert Compton had no chance of speaking to his companion prisoners, who stood, a sorrowful group, waiting their turn to appear before the Sultan. They were led before Tippu, in bodies of three or four, later in the day, and, like Compton, offered the alternative of service, or death. A few chose service and life, but the majority preferred to die.

That same evening the miserable band was marched off to Nandidrúg, where they arrived about a week later, after a journey full of indignities and hardships, under which some of the weaker of the party died.

The following day they were marched three or four miles out from Nandidrúg until they came to a huge pile of rocks on the plain.

When they reached the foot of the rocks, the bearers put down the *doolies* in which the prisoners had been carried. The prisoners were violently dragged out. Some of them resisted, and clung to their *doolies*, but their weak struggles were easily overcome by the powerful men who formed the famous guard of the rock.

The officer in charge of the prisoners had ridden on ahead, and now waited their coming at the top of the rock. Herbert Compton had noticed that this officer had seemed to avoid him during the march. He had, however, seen his face two or three times, and it seemed familiar to him ; but he could not remember where he had seen it before. He was the first

prisoner who arrived at the top of the rock. One of the guards led him by a rope tied to both his arms, while others with drawn swords walked on each side of him and behind him. During the long and miserable journey he had plenty of time to think over his fate ; but he had had to face death so many times in the past five years, that he felt almost glad that now at last the end of his sufferings had come. He had been, it is true, cast down and sick and faint at heart that morning as he thought of the home and family he would never see again, but now his spirit seemed strong again within him. One plunge, he thought, and all would be over, then he should be released from this worse than death. Prayer, too, was in his heart and on his lips, and his soul was comforted, as he stepped firmly upon the level space above and looked around him.

The Jemadar was there, and a few other soldiers. The terrace was a naked rock, which was heated by the sun so that it scorched the bare feet. There were a few bushes growing around it, and on one side were two mud houses, the one closed, the other open for the guard. Besides these, there was a hut of reeds, which was used as a place for keeping water.

"You are welcome, captain," said the Jemadar with mock politeness. "Are you ready to taste of the banquet of death?"

"Now," was the reply; "I am ready." And Herbert hoped that his turn would come at once. His energies were knit, and his spirit prepared for the change.

"Not yet," said the Jemadar: "I would speak with you first. Lead the rest away into the house yonder," he continued to the guard, "loose them, and lock the door." It was done, and Herbert alone remained outside.

"Listen!" he said, addressing Herbert, "do you remember me?"

"I have seen your face before," said Herbert; "but I cannot remember where. But what has this

to do with death ? I am ready to die , bid your people do their office."

"That will not be for many days," he replied , " I have a long reckoning to settle with you."

"For what ? I never harmed you"

"When General Matthews was in Bednur, and there was alarm of the Sultan's coming, you suspected me. You insulted and threatened to hang me. We are even now,—do you understand ?"

"What ! Jaffar Sahib, the guide, the man who betrayed the salt he ate ?"

"Even so. You were owls, fools, and fell into the snare laid for you."

"Has your resentment slumbered so long then ?" said Herbert. "I pity you · your own heart must be a hell to you."

"Dare to speak so again, and I will spit on you."

"It would be like you to do so , but I am silent," was Herbert's reply

"Where is the money that you and that old fool buried in Bednur ? Lead me to it, and I will save your life. The coast is near, and you can escape. Fear not to speak,—those around do not understand us"

"Your master has been told by me, by Matthews, who lost his life in that cause, and by every one, that there was none but what he found We hid no money—you well know this . why do you torment me ?"

"You will remember it in three or four days, perhaps," said the man ; "till then I shall not ask you again. Go to the company of your people."

Herbert's mind had been stung up to its purpose and he coveted death at that moment as the dearest boon which could have been granted But it was denied him , and he could only gather from the leader of the party that further suffering was in store for him. In spite of his utmost exertions to repel the feeling, despondence came over him,—a sickening and sinking of his heart, which his utmost exertion of mind could not repel.

On the fourth day the Jemadar arrived.

"Come forth," he said to Herbert, "I would speak to you. Will you be obstinate, O fool? will you longer refuse to tell of the money, and claim the Sultan's benevolence?"

"You could not grant me a greater favour than death," said Herbert; "if there was money hidden, you should have it, I know it is your god. But there is none, therefore let me die. I tell you once for all, I spurn your master's offers with loathing."

"Do you know what this death is?" said the Jemadar, "you shall see." And he called to several of the guards who stood around. Herbert thought, as they led him to the brink, that his time was come.

They led him passively to the edge of the rock; the Jemadar stood there already. It was a dizzy place, and Herbert's eyes swam as he surveyed it.

"You are not to die, Feringhi," said the Jemadar, "but look over. Behold what will be your fate!"

Herbert obeyed mechanically, and the men held him fast on the very verge, or the temptation would have been strong to have thrown himself down. He looked down. The hot and glaring sunlight fell full on the mangled remains of his comrades, which lay in a confused heap at the bottom; a hundred vultures were scrambling over each other to get at them, and the bodies were snatched to and fro by their united efforts. The Jemadar heaved a fragment of rock over, which, rebounding from the side, crashed among the brushwood and the unclean birds; they arose screaming at being disturbed, and two or three jackals skulked away through the brushwood. But Herbert saw not these, the first glance sickened him, weak and excited as he was, and he fainted.

2.—*The Good Fakir*

"He has fainted, or is dead," cried the men who held him, to the Jemadar, who was busied in heaving over another fragment of rock. "He has fainted; shall we fling him over?"

"For your lives, do not!" cried the Jemadar; "draw back from there—let us see what is the matter."

"He must not die yet," continued Jaffar Sahib; "what would the Sultan say to us? Away! get some water, he may revive. This is only a faint, the effect of terror; he will soon speak again."

For some hours he continued like this. At last a violent shivering commenced. The guards, having received strict orders to keep him alive, wrapped him up in warm cloths and rubbed his limbs. But the shivering continued and he was several times violently sick. After a time, he broke into a violent heat, and began to rave wildly. As the attendants could not understand his language, they called out one of the prisoners, a soldier called Bolton, to stay with him and see to his wants.

All night he lay in a raging fever, violently raving, and constantly crying for water.

Poor Bolton did what he could, but it was in vain; and when the Jemadar returned in the morning for the purpose of adding another victim to his list, he found Herbert in such a state as to alarm him, for the Sultan had sworn he would have life for life if anything happened to him.

"He must be removed instantly," he said. "Away, one of you, for a *dooly*! Bring it to the foot of the rock—we will carry him down thither, and he must be removed to the town."

In the end, too, he was merciful, for he took Bolton with him to attend on Herbert while he should live; it could not be long, he thought, for he raved incessantly.

It was on a mild and balmy evening that Herbert awoke to consciousness, about a week after he had been removed. He lay in the open air, under the shade of a wide-spreading peepul-tree, upon a mound of earth surrounding a tomb; which, from its clean white-washed state, and the garlands of flowers which hung upon it, was evidently that of a Mohammadan saint or holy martyr. At a

short distance was a small mosque, very white and clean, behind which rose noble tamarind-trees, tall cocoanut palms and plantains. The sun sank in glory behind the mountains beyond. As the evening fell, and the golden tints of the west faded, giving place to the rich hues of crimson and purple which spread over it, the sonorous voice of the Muazzin, from a corner of the enclosure, called the Believers to prayer. A few of the devout answered to it, and advancing from one side, performed their ablutions at a little fountain which cast up a tiny thread of spray into the air. This done, they entered the mosque, and, marshalled in a row, went through, with apparent fervour, the evening prayers.

Afterwards two came towards Herbert,—one, an old man in the garb of a Fakir, the other a gentleman of respectable appearance, who, from the sword he carried under his arm, might be an officer. Herbert heard one say, “Most likely he is dead now; he was dying when we last saw him, and his attendant went with Jaffar Sahib to purchase his winding sheet.”

“I have hope,” said the old Fakir, “the medicine I gave him (praised be the power of God!) has rarely failed in such cases, and if the fever is past he will recover.”

Herbert heard this and strove to speak; his lips moved, but no words followed above a whisper: he was weaker than an infant. But now the Fakir came to him and felt his hand and head; they were cool and moist, and Herbert turned to look on them with a heart full of gratitude at the kindness and interest which their words and looks expressed.

“Oh, he lives! he is free from the disease (blessed be the power of God!)—he is once more among the living. Therefore rejoice O Feringhi,” exclaimed the Fakir, “and bless God that you live! for He has been merciful to you. Six days have you lain in yonder *serai*, and the breath was in your nostrils, but it has now returned to your heart, so be thankful.”

"I am grateful for your kindness, Shah Sahib," said Herbert, speaking very faintly,—for he had learned the proper way to address all respectable Fakirs long before—"God will reward you, I pray you tell me who you are, and where I am. I think I was—"

"Trouble not yourself to think on the past," he replied, "it was not destined to be, and your life is for the present safe, you are in the garden of the poor slave of Allah and the Prophet, Sheikh Farid of Balapur." Then, turning to his companion, he continued, "But, Khan Sahib, we should not speak to the youth, let him be quiet, the air will revive him; and when they return he shall be carried back to the *serai*"

They left him; and soon he heard footsteps approaching. A figure was running towards him—he could not surely be mistaken—it was an English face—he came nearer—it was Bolton

"I have carried you forth day by day in my arms, and laid you yonder," said the faithful fellow, as he lifted him up like a child: "they said you would die, and I thought if you were sensible before that time came, you would like to be in this shady cool place."

When a week had gone by, Jemadar Jaffar Sahib, who had carefully avoided him during his illness, came to him with the Fakir. He made a last attempt to persuade Herbert Compton to tell him where the Bednur treasure was; and when Compton once more swore he knew nothing about it, he announced that he had received orders from the Sultan to take him back to prison. "When am I to travel?" asked Herbert. "To-morrow," said the Jemadar, "if you are strong enough. The Sultan's orders are urgent."

"He is not strong enough," said the Fakir; "on my head be the blame for his remaining longer"

"No," said Herbert, "I am feeble, it is true, but let it be as the Sultan wills. While I have life, Shah Sahib, I will remember you as a kind and dear friend; and, if God wills, we may meet again."

"If God wills it" said the Fakir. "O Lord of Power, grant that we may meet again!"

And, full of regret at parting with this true friend, Herbert left the place next day, accompanied by his comrade in captivity, the soldier Bolton. The journey did not tire him as he had expected, and when they reached Bangalore in three days, he felt stronger and better than before he started.

After travelling many days, Herbert and his guards began to climb the steep passes of the Nilgiri Hills, or Blue Mountains. At last they reached their destination—the top of a lofty peak, which stood out solitary from the mountain range, and the sides of which were dizzy precipices of five thousand feet almost perpendicular to the bottom. Here had been built a small fort, which, for all he knew, was to be Herbert's home and prison for the rest of his life. The view of mountains, valleys, forests, and the plains below, was magnificent; the air was cool, and the climate bracing; but these were but poor compensation for liberty, which, Herbert felt, he had lost for ever.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW TIPPU SULTAN WENT HUNTING.

1.—Rumours of War.

Six months had now passed at Seringapatam during much of which time Kasim Ali had been absent on various duties. Hardly a month after his disgrace, the Sultan had sent him on a mission requiring great wisdom and tact. It will be remembered that Abdul Rahman Khan had stated in the Durbar that the Nizam of Hyderabad was thinking of sending an embassy to Seringapatam. No embassy, however, had arrived; and Tippu became anxious. He was very eager to form an alliance with the Nizam, for he believed that if the Amir of Afghanistan could only see the too great Mohammadan powers of the South united, he would attack the English in the North. The three allies would then be able to drive the foreigners into the sea for ever. So, becoming impatient, he sent Kasim, attended by only a few horsemen, to Hyderabad, to find out the real feelings of the court and people of the Nizam towards him.

Kasim's mission was successful, and he came back with the news that the Nizam was favourable to friendship with Tippu, and that an embassy was really coming to Seringapatam.

The Sultan was delighted at the news, and a few months after conducted the campaign against the Nairs which he had mentioned at the Durbar, and completely subdued them. A few days after he had arrived with his army in triumph at Coimbatore, the long-looked for embassy from Hyderabad arrived, and its members were received by the Sultan in

a full Durbar of his officers with all the pomp of royal state.

A close alliance between Mysore and Hyderabad might have been the result but Tippu spoilt it by his own vanity. He had long wanted to strengthen his position by marrying into an old-established royal family. He thought that his chance had now come, when the Nizam, humbled by the English and in fear of the Mahrattas, sought alliance with him. So, in spite of the advice of his officers, Tippu made this marriage a condition of the alliance. But the Nizam, who felt he had already lowered himself by sending an embassy to a self-made Sultan, a low-born upstart, was furious at Tippu's proposal when told of it by his ambassadors, and in the end threw himself entirely into the cause of the English.

Those who were near the Sultan when he received the Nizam's reply, saw how the refusal touched his pride, and expected an outbreak of violent anger. But he stifled his feelings for the time. He was only heard to say, "Well, it does not matter. We, who are the chosen of Allah, will do alone the work which lies before us. In the name of God ! alone we will do what Nizam Ali Khan will wonder at as he sits smoking in his zenana."

His army, too, felt the insult, and in their mad zeal might have been led to the gates of Hyderabad, or those of Madras ; but that was not the Sultan's plan. He felt that the time had come to carry out a plan that had been sketched out by his father. Haidar Ali had long coveted Travancore, but his attacks upon it had failed. Tippu now determined on its conquest, and demanded that the Rajah should at once give up those of the conquered Nairs who had taken refuge in Travancore territory. As this demand was indignantly refused, Tippu marched from Coimbatore at the head of thirty-five thousand men, the flower of his army.

Kasim Ali had distinguished himself in the campaign against the Nairs, serving with half the

Khan's regiment under the command of Dilawar Ali. The Khan himself had remained in Seringapatam ; but he now joined the army with the remainder of his regiment. He had brought Ameena with him, to the disgust of his other wives, who had found no opportunity of persecuting their rival during his stay. She had not so far been molested, and was as happy as was possible for her to be with such companions.

Kasim Ali and Abdul Rahman Khan were now once more united, and looked forward eagerly to sharing the dangers and adventures of the campaign together. Kasim often watched the well-known palankin of Ameena on the daily march. He heard she was well ; and it would have been pleasant to him if he could have known the truth—that he was often the subject of interesting conversation between her and her lord, and that she remembered him gratefully.

Through the plain which extends westward to the ocean, between the huge and precipitous Nilgiris on the one hand, and the lofty and many-peaked Anaimalai range on the other, the host of Tippu poured. Day by day saw an advance of many miles ; and the season being favourable, they marched on without a check. The Sultan was always at the head of the column of march, sometimes on foot with a musket on his shoulder, showing an example to his regular infantry who followed in order, relating his dreams and pretending to inspiration among his flatterers who marched with him. At other times he appeared surrounded by his irregular cavalry, whom of old he had led against the English,—a gorgeous-looking force, consisting of men of all descriptions—the small and wiry Mahratta, the more robust Mohammadan, men from Afghanistan and from the north of India, whom the splendid service and brilliant reputation of the Sultan had tempted from their distant homes.

Sometimes he would be seen to dash out from among them as they rode along, and turning his horse in the plain, would soon be followed by

the most active and best-mounted of his officers, whose bright costumes, armour, and gaudy trappings glistened in the sun as they rode at one another. Then would follow some mock combat or skirmish, in which the Sultan bore an active and often a victorious part, and in which hard blows were often given. Ever foremost in these mock encounters were Kasim Ali and the Khan, his commander, the former, however, was always the most conspicuous.

Tippu had often noticed the young Kasim since his mission to Hyderabad, and as Kasim attended the Khan (who was always among the crowd of officers near the person of the Sultan) he often had a chance of joining in these mock-fights, in which he was dreaded by many for his strength, perfect mastery of his weapons, and beautiful horsemanship.

Kasim had been more than usually fortunate one morning, a few days after they had left Coimbatore. He had engaged rather roughly with another officer, and had overthrown him, and the Sultan expressed himself with more than usual warmth to the Khan.

"We must forgive your young friend," he said, "and promote him, did you see how he overthrew Surmust Khan just now, Khan Sahib? There are few who could do that. We had much trouble to persuade Surmust that it was accidental. You must tell the youth to be more discreet in future; we would have no man his enemy but ourselves."

"May your condescension increase!" cried the Khan, "I will tell the youth; but did my lord ever see him shoot?"

"Ha! he can do that also, Khan? Could he hit me yonder goat, think you?" exclaimed Tippu, as he pointed to one, browsing among some craggy rocks at a short distance.

"It is a long shot," said the Khan, putting his forefinger between his teeth and considering; "nevertheless, I think he could."

‘ Will you hold me a wager he does?’ cried the Sultan; “ I will bet you a pair of English pistols against that old one of yours, he does not hit it”

“ May your favour never be less upon your servant ! I accept it,” cried the Khan ; and he turned round to seek Kasim, who was behind among the other officers. The Sultan stopped, and those around him cried out, “ A wager ! a wager ! The Sultan will win, his destiny is great !”

Kasim was brought from the rear to where the Sultan stood awaiting him. All was soon explained to him. But the distance was great, and he doubted his power, however, he did not dare to disobey. The goat continued steady, and after a long aim he fired. He was successful ; the animal lost its footing, and rolled from its high place. “ Wonderful !” passed from mouth to mouth, while some wondered at, and others envied, young Kasim’s success

“ It must have been chance,” cried the Sultan good-humouredly ; “ even we, who are by the blessing of God a sure shot, could not have done that. Nevertheless you have won the pistols, Khan, and shall have them. But’ what say you, my friends, to a hunt ? Yonder are the Anaimalai hills, and it is strange if we find no game. We will prove you again, young sir, before we believe your dexterity”

“ A hunt, a hunt !” cried all, and the words were taken up and passed from rank to rank, from regiment to regiment, down the long column, until all knew of it, and were prepared to bear their part in the royal sport. Preparations were begun as soon as the army arrived at its halting-place. Men were sent forward for information of game ; all the inhabitants of the country round were collected by the irregular horse to assist in driving it towards one spot, where it might be attacked.

2.—Kasim Shoots a Tiger.

The royal huntsman chose a narrow valley for the scene of the Sultan’s hunt. Into this an army of

beaters, under his superintendence, for a whole day drove game from the plains. A strong body of infantry was placed across the mouth of the valley to prevent the escape of the game, and the precipitous sides of the gorge were guarded by hundreds of beaters and rocket-men. The head of the valley was shut in by a lofty cliff, down which dashed a waterfall.

The following day the hunt began. It was a heart-stirring and magnificent sight to see the advance of that mighty hunting party into the glen. As it was scarcely a quarter of a mile across, the numerous elephants and horsemen were so close together that it was impossible for anything to escape the line which now slowly but steadily advanced. The distance from the mouth of the valley to the waterfall was not more than three-quarters of a mile, and nearly straight, so that the greater part of the intervening distance could be seen distinctly—in some places a thick and impenetrable jungle, in others open. Along the abrupt sides, and in advance of the royal party, were stationed those who, as the line advanced, discharged rockets, which whizzing into the air descended at a short distance among the trees and brushwood, and urged on the game to the end, where it was met by other discharges. Hundreds of men bore large flat drums, which they beat incessantly with sticks; and from time to time the broken and monotonous sound of the kettle-drums which accompanied Tippu, and snowed where he was, mingled with the din of shouts, screams, halloos, the shrill blasts of the horns, the shriller trumpeting of the elephants, and the neighings of the wild and frightened horses.

Tippu rode on the back of his noble white-faced elephant, Haider, in a *howdah* of silver lined with blue velvet. His various guns and rifles were on a rail in front of him, ready to his hand. Only one favourite attendant accompanied him, and he had charge of his powder and bullets. Abdul Rahman

Khan and Kasim, riding upon one of the Sultan's own elephants, had been ordered to keep as near him as the crowd would allow.

At first no game was seen, except hundreds of wild hog, and a few timid deer—all of which perished in trying to break through the advancing line of hunters.

At length two huge black bears were roused from their den among some rocks, and with loud roars strove to pass through the line. They were met by the swords and shields of fifty men upon whom they rushed, and, though they strove gallantly for their lives and wounded several, they were cut to pieces.

The party had now proceeded about half way, and there was before the Sultan's elephant a patch of dry rank grass which reached above its middle. It was of small extent, however, and was already half surrounded by elephants with their gay *howdahs* and more gaily dressed riders.

"Hold!" cried the Sultan, "we would try this alone, or with only a few, it is a likely place. Come Khan, and you Mir Sahib, see what you can do to help us, now, Kasim Ali, prove to me that you can shoot—Bismilla!"

"Bismilla!" cried one and all, and the mahouts urging on the noble beasts, they entered the long grass together. They had not gone many yards, when Haidar, who led, raised his white trunk high into the air, giving at the same time one of those low growls which proved there was something concealed before him. "*Shabash*, Haidar!" cried the Sultan, "you shall eat sugar for this; get on, my son, get on!"

The noble beast seemed almost to understand him, for he quickened his pace even without the command of the mahout. At that moment a rocket discharged from the side, whizzed through the grass before them. The effect was instantaneous, two beautiful tigers arose at once. One of them stood for an instant, looking proudly around him, and lashing

his tail as he looked at the line of elephants, several of which were restless and cowardly. The other tried to sneak off, but was stopped by a shot which turned him ; and with a terrific roar, which sounded clear far above the din of the beaters, it charged the nearest elephant. It was beaten off, however, receiving several shots, and was then followed by a crowd of the hunters.

Kasim and the Khan had a mind to pursue it too, but their attention was at once attracted to the Sultan, who, having fired and wounded the other tiger, had been charged by it, and had just fired again. He had missed, however, and the animal excited to fury, had sprung at old Haidar. Haidar had received the onset firmly, and as the tiger strove to fasten upon his shoulders, had kicked him off ; but at the second charge, when the Sultan could not fire, the tiger had seized the elephant's leg, and was tearing it with all the energy of rage.

In vain did the Sultan try to fire, he could see the tiger, only for a moment at a time, and as Haidar was no longer steady, he again missed his aim. Kasim was, however, near, and with others was anxiously watching his opportunity to fire ; but before he could do so, one of the men on foot, a stout brawny soldier with sword drawn and his buckler on his arm, dashed at the tiger, and dealt him a fierce blow on the loins. The blood gushed forth, and the brute, instantly quitting his hold, turned upon the man with a roar which appalled all hearts. The latter met him manfully, but was unskilful, or the beast was too powerful. All was the work of an instant the tiger and the man rolled upon the ground,—but only one arose ; the torn and bleeding body of the brave fellow lay there, his face turned upwards to the sun, and his eyes fixed in the leaden stare of death. Now was Kasim's opportunity ; as the tiger looked around him for an instant to make another spring—he fired. The brute reeled a few paces to the foot of the Sultan's elephant, fell back, and his dying struggles

were shortened by the vigorous kicks of the old elephant, who bandied the carcass between his legs like a football

"Enough! old Haidar," cried the Sultan, who had been soundly shaken. "Enough! enough! he is dead—thanks to your friend yonder, what! not satisfied yet? Well, then, this is to please you," and he fired again. It was apparently sufficient, for the noble beast became once more composed.

3 — *Kasim shoots an Elephant*

While the mahout dismounted to examine the elephant's wounds, the Sultan made some hurried inquiries about the man who had been killed. No one, however, knew him, so directing his body to be borne to the rear, and the mahout having reported that there was no injury of consequence done to Haidar, the Sultan, and with him the whole line, once more pressed forward.

As he passed Kasim the Sultan now greeted him heartily. "You did me good service, youth," he cried, "but for you my poor Haidar would have been sorely hurt. Enough—look sharp! there may be more work for your gun yet."

So indeed there was at every step, as they advanced, the quantity of game appeared to increase. Another bear was aroused, and, after producing a vast deal of merriment and shouting, was slain as the former ones had been. Several hyænas were speared or shot, guns were discharged in all directions at the deer and hogs which were everywhere running about, and bullets were flying, much to the danger of the hunters themselves. Indeed, one or two men were severely wounded during the day.

Suddenly, when they had nearly reached the head of the glen, the Sultan, who was leading, stopped. The others hastened after him, as fast as the thick crowd would allow, and all beheld a sight which raised their excitement to the utmost. Before them,

on a small open spot, under a rock, close to the right side of the glen, stood three elephants, one a huge male, the others a female and her calf.

No one spoke—all were breathless with anxiety, for it was impossible to say whether it would be best to attack the large elephant where he stood, or to allow him to advance. The latter seemed to be the opinion of most; and the Sultan awaited his coming, while he hallooed to those in advance to urge him on. The wild elephant stood, awaiting his foes. His small red eyes twinkled with excitement; his looks were savage, and he appeared almost resolved upon a rush, to endeavour to break the line and escape, or perish. However, there was no time for consideration. As the Sultan raised his gun to his shoulder several shots were fired, and the noble beast, impelled by rage and agony, rushed at once upon the nearest elephant among his enemies. A shower of balls met him, but he heeded them not—he was maddened, and could see or feel only his own revenge. In vain the mahout of the elephant that was attacked strove to turn his beast, which had been suddenly paralysed by fear, but the wild one appeared to have no revengeful feelings against his fellow. While they all looked on, without being, able to afford the least aid, the wild elephant had seized in his trunk the mahout of the one he had attacked, wheeled him round high in the air, and dashed him upon the ground. A cry of horror burst from all present, and a volley of bullets were rained upon him. It had the effect of making him drop the body—but though sorely wounded, he did not fall, and retreating, he passed from their sight into the thick jungle.

“Pursue! pursue!” cried Tippu from his elephant. “Are we to be defied by such a brute? We will have him yet. A hundred rupees to him who shoots him dead.”

The crowd hurried on, their excitement had reached almost a kind of madness. Everyone

scrambled to be first, horsemen and foot, and those who rode the elephants, all in confusion, and shouting more tumultuously than ever.

They came close to the top of the glen; the murmur of the fall could sometimes be heard when the shouting ceased for an instant. The ground underneath them was quite clear, so that the elephants could advance easily.

"He is there—I see him!" cried the Sultan, aiming at the wounded elephant, and firing "He comes! be ready—Fire!"

The noble animal came thundering on with his trunk uplifted, roaring fearfully, followed by the two others. It was a last and desperate effort to break the line. The blood was streaming from fifty wounds in his sides, and he was already weak; with that one effort he had hoped to have saved himself and the female, but in vain. As he came on, the Khan cried hurriedly to Kasim, "Above the eye! above the eye! you are sure of him there." He was met by a shower of balls, several of which hit him in the head. He seemed to stagger for a moment; his trunk, which had been raised high in the air, dropped, and he fell; his limbs quivered for an instant, and then he lay still in death. Kasim's bullet had been too truly aimed.

"*Shabash, Shabash!* he is dead!" shouted the Sultan, wild with excitement, "now for the rest. Spare the young one; now for the female—beware, she will be savage!"

But she was not so at first. She retreated as far as the rock would allow her, and placing herself between her enemies and her calf, which unconscious of danger, still strove to suck her milk, she tried to protect it from the shot, that hit her almost every time. Now and then she would utter low plaintive moans, which if those who fired at her possessed any feeling, would have pleaded with them to leave her alone. At times, goaded on by maddening pain she charged the line, but only to be driven back foiled and disheartened.

"Will they not let her go free," cried Kasim—"she and the young one? Listen, Khan, to her moans. I will not fire—I cannot"

"Put her out of pain!" said the Khan "Aim now again just over the eye, in the temple, be steady, the shot is sure to kill. Now! see they are going to fire again at her."

Kasim raised his unerring gun the firing had ceased at the moment—all were loading. One sharp crack was heard, and the poor beast sank down without a moan or a struggle. This was the end of the hunt. Soon after the Sultan mounted his elephant, and the hunters began to return to the camp

CHAPTER XII.

HOW KASIM ALI RESCUED AMEENA A SECOND TIME

1 — Kasim is Trusted.

Their horses were at the entrance of the valley, and alighting from their elephant, Kasim and the Khan mounted them, and rode on towards the camp. The thousands who had come out for the sport were now returning, some in crowds together, singing a wild song in chorus, others in smaller groups, chatting upon events of the day. Here and there was a palankin, bearing to the camp either some one too lazy or too grand to ride on horseback, or else the fair inhabitant of the Sultan's or some other harem, who had been allowed to see as much as was possible of the royal hunt.

"That is surely the Khanum's palankin," said Kasim, as its well-known appearance met his view at a turn of the road.

"Yes," said the Khan, "she has been dull of late, and I begged her to come out."

"But how is it that the Khanum is unattended in such a crowd as this? Some ill-mannered fellow might insult her, or say something disagreeable."

"Well remarked. The horsemen must have lost her, let us ride up and see." They urged their horses forward and were soon with her.

"How is this?" cried the Khan to the head bearer; "how comes it that you are alone?"

"*Hazır!*" replied the man, "we lost the escort, and so thought we had better return by ourselves, for we knew not where to look for them in such a crowd."

"We had better stay by the palankin ourselves, Khan Sahib," said Kasim.

"Be it so then, Kasim ; we will not leave her."

In a few minutes, however, the Sultan advanced rapidly on horseback at the head of a brilliant group of officers. A gay sight were they, as the afternoon sun glanced from spear and sword, from shield, gun and steel cap, and from their fluttering scarfs of gay colours and gold and silver tissue. A band of spearmen, bearing heavy broad-bladed spears ornamented with gay tassels, ran before him, calling out his titles in extravagant terms. Behind him was the crowd of officers and attendants, checking their gaily decorated and plunging horses ; and quite in the rear, followed the whole of the elephants, their bells jingling in a confused clash, and urged on by their drivers at their fullest speed to keep pace with the horses. The Sultan sat his beautiful grey Arab horse with the ease and grace of a practised rider, now checking the ardent creature and nearly throwing him backwards, now urging it on to make bounds and leaps.

"It is a gallant sight, Kasim !" said the Khan ; for they had drawn up to one side, as the company came thundering on over a level and open spot, to let it pass. "Looking at them, a soldier's eye glistens and his heart swells ; does not yours do so ? Look out, my pearl !" he cried to Ameena ; "veil yourself and look out—the Sultan comes."

"But see," he continued "he beckons to me. Remain with the Khanum, Kasim, and bring her into the camp." So saying he dashed away to join the Sultan's party. Kasim saw the Khan draw up beside him, joining his hands as if speaking to him ; and as the wild and glittering group hurried by, horses and elephants intermingled, he lost sight of him among the crowd, which rapidly disappeared behind a grove of trees.

Kasim at once ordered the bearers to proceed, and himself rode closely behind the palankin. The bearers were proceeding rapidly when, at a turning of the road, they saw an elephant, one of the

royal procession, which, perhaps excited by the hunt, was running hither and thither on the road in the wildest manner. Its driver seemed to be quite unable to control it. The bearers stopped. They dared not go on ; there seemed no time to go back , and they could not leave the road because it was shut in with thick hedges of prickly pear

Kasim saw the danger, and drew his sword. He had just ordered the bearers to go back, as he rode forward to meet the elephant, when it lifted up its trunk and with loud trumpeting dashed straight at them.

Kasim was brave and cool ; and yet there was something so frightful in the desperate rush of the maddened animal, that his heart almost failed him. He saw the palankin was its object, and dashing forward almost as it reached it, he struck with his whole force at the brute's trunk, which was just within reach. The blow and the pain turned the animal from his purpose, but its huge bulk grazed the palankin, which, with its terrified bearers, fell heavily and roughly to the ground and rolled upon its side.

Kasim heard the scream of Ameena the moment the shock was given, and throwing himself from his horse he hurried to help her, for he was certain she must be severely hurt.

She was stunned and extremely terrified ; but a few moments of rest, and the consciousness of Kasim's presence, revived her.

When Kasim had seen Ameena's palankin arrive safely at the Khan's tents, he rode off by himself away from the camp. Ameena was received by her women and her old nurse, Meeran.

Not long afterwards the Khan himself arrived, and when he heard Ameena's story of the adventure, he was at first horrified at the danger she had been in, and then overjoyed at her safety and full of gratitude to Kasim.

When the Khan had left her, her old nurse Meeran, comforted her. She was the sister of Zulfikar, the

cook, and had only recently come from Hyderabad to serve her young mistress again. Ameena was very glad to have her with her, for she could not open her heart to the women of the Khan's household who attended upon her, for they were all natives of the South with whom she had nothing in common, and they scarcely understood her speech. With Meeran, however, almost a new life had begun, for she could talk with her for hours of her home, her family, her friends, and her life with the Khan and his household.

Meanwhile Kasim Ali was riding alone, and as the musical voices of the Muazzins among the army, proclaiming the Azán, or evening prayers, called the faithful into their various groups to pray, he rode up to the Khan's tent, where the usual number had their carpets spread and awaited the proper moment to begin. Kasim joined them.

When the prayer was ended, the Khan called him into his private tent and poured out his thanks, and the thanks of Ameena, for his timely and gallant help in her late extreme danger.

"And now," said the Khan, after he had fairly overwhelmed the young man with thanks, "I have news, and good news for you! You are ordered to attend the morning Durbar, and I think for your good. The Sultan (may his favour increase!) has looked once more with an eye of favour upon you, he means to give you a command among his guards, and to attach you to his person. I shall lose you, therefore, Kasim, but you will ever find me as sincere and devoted a friend as you have hitherto done. We may soon be separated, but so long as we march thus day after day, indeed so long as this campaign continues, we may at least associate together as we have been accustomed to do."

Kasim could hardly reply to the Khan's kind expressions. That he had been exerting his influence with the Sultan on his account, he could have no doubt, and this, with the affectionate friendship he had professed, filled the young man's heart with gratitude.

2 — Kasim is promoted. .

He accompanied the Khan as usual during the march, for the army proceeded the next morning on its way, and at mid-day he rode with him to the place where the Sultan held his morning Durbar, in some anxiety as to what would happen. The tents of the monarch had not been pitched, for under the thick shade of some enormous tamarind-trees there was found ample space for the assembly; and pillows had been placed, and soft carpets spread for his reception. One by one the different leaders and officers of rank arrived, and dismounting ranged themselves about the place which had been set apart for the Sultan. On the outskirts of the spot the grooms led about their chargers, whose loud and impatient neighing resounded through the grove. On one side the busy camp could be seen, as division after division of horse and foot arrived in turn, and took up their ground in regular order.

At last the Sultan's kettle-drums were heard, and in a few minutes he galloped up at the head of a crowd of attendants, and immediately dismounting, advanced into the centre of the group, and returned their low obeisances. There were a few reports to be listened to, one or two fearful punishments to be inflicted, and these done, the Sultan turned to Abdul Rahman Khan, who stood near him.

"Where is the young man?" he said, "we have thought much of him during the night, and our dreams have confirmed the previous visions we have mentioned regarding him. Therefore let him be brought, we would do justice in his case. This is a fortunate day and hour, as we have read by the stars."

Kasim was at hand; and amidst the crowd of courtiers, and flatterers, who would have given all they possessed to have been so noticed, he advanced, bowed three times, and then stood with his hands folded in an attitude of humility and attention.

"Youth!" cried the Sultan, "we have heard that it was you who killed the mad elephant yesterday, when our royal hand trembled and our gun missed fire. We offered a reward for that deed—do you claim it?"

"May I be your sacrifice!" replied Kasim, "I know not, what can I say?—let the Khan answer for me"

"He has already told me all," cried the Sultan, 'therefore we have sent for you. Hear, then, and reflect on what we say to you. You shall be raised higher than you were before, and we will arrange your pay hereafter. It will be your business to attend on and accompany us, and in the coming battles, in which by the aid of the Prophet we intend to surpass our former deeds, which are known to all—"

Here he looked around, and cries of "Wonderful! The Sultan is great and valiant! he eats mountains and drinks rivers! before his eyes the livers of his enemies melt into water!" passed from mouth to mouth.

"Therefore," he continued, after a pause, "do your service well and boldly, and it shall be good for you that you have eaten the salt of Tippu. You are Jemadar from this time forth, O Kasim Ali! and hear all of you that it is so ordered"

The congratulations of all fell upon the gladdened ears of the young Patél, who, in truth, as he bowed low and fell back among the crowd, was somewhat bewildered by his new honour, so great and so unexpected.

"Proclaim silence!" Tippu cried to the attendants, and after the loud cries of "Khamosh! khamosh!" had in some degree subsided, he addressed the assembled officers, whose number was every moment increased by other wild and martial figures from the camp, who crowded behind the rest on tiptoe to hear his address

"You all know," he said, "how the Rajah of Travancore has allowed our rebellious and infidel

subjects, the Nairs, to have shelter in his territory. We have demanded them from him, and have met with insult and scorn in his replies; are we, who are the chosen of Allah, to bear this patiently?"

Let him die!" cried the assembly with one voice, their passions suddenly aroused by this abrupt address.

"Stay!" continued Tippu—his face becoming inflamed, and his eye glistening like that of a tiger chafing into fury,—‘we, by the favour of Allah, have accurate knowledge of the unbelievers and of the English. We know that this miserable Rajah is upheld by them; but we have ere now humbled their pride. Baillie and Matthews, with their hosts—where are they? and we will humble them again, and drive them into the sea! They have threatened us with war if we attack the wall which this Rajah has built upon our subjects’ territory, and over which we have a right to pass to Cochin, whither it is our pleasure to go. Say, therefore, my friends, shall there be peace? Shall we, who wear swords on our thighs eat dirt at the hands of these unbelievers? or shall—”

The remainder of his speech was lost. The cry for war was as one voice. He had appealed to the fierce passions of his officers, who saw only victory in prospect, and they had responded as warmly as he could wish.

In a few days afterwards the army arrived within sight of the wall. It was very high and thick, had a broad and deep ditch in front, and was a formidable obstacle to the invading army. It is probable that, had Tippu attacked the wall at once, he might have carried it by storm; but he hesitated for a time to strike a blow which must mean war with the English, and therefore drew off a short distance to the northward, where, engaged in correspondence with the English and Travancore Governments, he passed most of his time, thus allowing his enemy every opportunity to increase his force and prepare for resistance.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW TIPPU SULTAN SPRAINED HIS ANKLE

1.—The Attack on the Wall.

Time passed on, the army advanced nearer to the wall. At length the Sultan, tired of inactivity, determined to strike the first blow in the strife which was evidently fast approaching. If he could only possess himself of Travancore, his operations against the English would be greatly aided. His resolution was, however, suddenly and unexpectedly made. Kasim with some men had been directed to examine a part of the defence where the wall joined a precipice, some miles from the camp, and to report whether it could be attacked with success. His report was favourable, and the Sultan gave orders for the attacking parties—ten thousand of the flower of his army—to prepare for immediate action.

Kasim was aware that his post would be one of danger, for the Sultan was determined to lead the attack in person, and it was more than probable that he would be bravely opposed by the defenders of the lines. Among these were many of the fugitive Nairs, who burned for an opportunity of revenging upon the Sultan's army the many insults and oppressions they had suffered.

Much, however, was hoped from so powerful an attack on an undefended point, and the Sultan's order was delivered to the army on the afternoon of Kasim's report. The divisions for the assault were ordered under arms after evening prayer, and all were in readiness, and rejoicing that ere that time on the morrow, the barrier before them would be overcome, and the dominions of their enemy open to plunder.

The night was bright and clear and cool. Lights were twinkling here and there upon the wall, which extended for miles on either side, showing that the watchers did not sleep, and sometimes the report of a musket was heard. The camp of the Sultan was alive with preparation, and the busy hum of men arose high into the still air. Soon all was completed, and when it was sufficiently dark the mass of men moved slowly out of the camp, and led by Kasim, took their way to the place he had discovered.

All night they marched, and as morning broke they came to the place. Here the great wall ended against a lofty rock which towered above it, and at first sight there seemed no possible way of reaching the top of the wall. But Kasim pointed out a narrow path, running up the cliff between two high rocks. It could have been defended by a few brave men against an army, but there were no defenders there for most of the Travancore troops were miles away at the gate, where they thought Tippu was going to attack.

When Kasim Ali and a few soldiers had reached the top of the rock above the wall, the Sultan himself and his bodyguard ascended, and the troops began to crowd up the path after him.

"Your road is a rare one, Kasim Ali!" said the Sultan, and touched his shoulder, "the army will soon be up, though the path is somewhat narrow. Do you see any one stirring on the wall?"

"No one, my lord; they have all been deceived by the troops before the gate, and imagine the attack is to be made there."

"Yes," said the Sultan, "we are unrivalled in such stratagems," but before he could continue, two shots from a distant part of the wall before them whistled over their heads.

"Ha! so the rogues are awake," cried Kasim, "I beseech you, my lord, to turn back, and not

to expose yourself to danger. Your slave will lead the way."

"In the name of God!" cried the Sultan retiring a few paces. "On with you! victory is before—cry Alla Yár! and set on them. Think that you fight for the faith, and that your Sultan is beholding your deeds of prowess."

"Alla Yár! Din! Din!" was now shouted by the hoarse voices of the crowd which occupied the top of the rock, and the cry flew from division to division down the pass and into the plain; thousands shouted "Alla Yár! Alla Yár!" the Sultan's wai-cry, and strained every nerve to press onwards.

The shout of the army was answered by several single shots from the same spot as before, and an officer of the regular infantry, who had been standing on the very brink of the precipitous rock, was seen to toss his arms wildly into the air, and fall headlong into the thicket below.

"Follow Kasım Ali Patel!" cried the daring young man—for he was the foremost, and the path was not at first clear to the rest. Drawing his sword and putting his arm through the loops of his shield, he dashed down, followed by a hundred of those who waited the signal of attack.

They scrambled down the side of the rock on to the wall—there was nothing that could be called a path for soldiers—and it was still so dark that objects could but dimly be seen. Once on the wall, however, all was fair before them. The parapet was broad enough for three or four men to pass abreast, and the whole body hurried on, pushed forward by the pressure from the rear. There was no retreating; on the one hand was the impassable ditch, on the other the jungle. They saw nothing of the defenders, though from time to time a fatal shot struck the dense mass, and one of their number fell headlong from the narrow path, or sinking down wounded, was thrown over by his comrades. The thick jungle hid the defenders of the wall, who retreated as the others

advanced, for they were as yet too few to offer any resistance. But gradually the noise of the shouting and firing was heard along the line of wall, and its defenders hurried along to the right to meet their enemies, judging that their flank had been turned. In this manner parties joined together and gradually succeeded in arresting the rapid approach of their enemies, who had now to fight for every foot of ground. Tower after tower was desperately disputed; the day was advancing, many of the men were exhausted by their long night march, and to stop or retreat was impossible.

"At this rate we shall never reach the gate," cried the Sultan, who had entered a tower which had just been taken, and where Kasim and many others were taking breath for an instant ere they recommenced their advance. "We shall never gain the gate—it must now be nearly six miles from us."

"And the men are very weary," said Kasim, for he spoke boldly.

"A thought strikes me," said the Sultan; "what if the wall were thrown down? we should then possess a breach, by which we could enter or go out at pleasure."

"A wise thought! Excellent advice! What great wisdom!" was repeated by the whole circle, while the Sultan stood by silent, apparently in further consideration upon the subject.

"Yes," he continued, after thinking for some time,—"yes, it is a good thought, and we charge you, Syud," he added, to his relative, "with its execution. Collect the pioneers, heave over the stones into the ditch, fill it up level with the plain. There will be a broad road soon. Be quick about it. And now, sirs, let us lose no more time, but press on, our swords are hardly red with the blood of the enemy, and they appear to be collecting yonder in some force."

"But," said the Syud, "this is a pioneer's work—leave me not with them."

"I have spoken," replied the Sultan, frowning. "Enough ! see my com and obeyed, and be quick about it !"

"We ay need the road too soon," said a voice : but, although they tried hard, they could not discover whose it was

Once more, then, they resolutely set forward, and the Sultan was on foot among his men, who were full of animation as he often spoke to them, and reminded them that those who fell were martyrs, who would be translated to Paradise, and those who survived would win honour and renown. But it was easy to see that, tired and exhausted as they were, the men had not their first spirit. Some hours of constant fighting, with no water to refresh the , had been more than they could support. The opposition every mo ent became more and more certain and effective, and each step was disputed.

2.—The Living Road.

Meanwhile the road over the ditch progressed but slowly. The Syud had thought himself offended by being left behind to see it done, and looked sulkily on without attempting to hasten the work. The pioneers were too few, indeed it would have been impossible to have done what the Sultan had ordered, even had the whole force joined in the work ; for the ditch was wide and deep, full of thorns, briars, matted creepers and bamboos, which had been planted on purpose to offer a hindrance to an enemy. A few stones only had been displaced, though the work had gone on nearly an hour, when it was suddenly and rudely interrupted.

The advancing party had proceeded hardly half a mile, with uch labour, when on a turn of the wall they saw a square building filled with the enemy, who in considerable numbers had taken post there, and were evidently determined to dispute it hotly.

"Ah ! had we now some of y good guns," cried the Sultan, "we would soon dislodge those fellows.

They have a cannon too ! There must be some one yonder who understands fighting better than those we have yet seen."

"May they be defeated !" cried a commander of a battalion of infantry, who was well known for his boasting. "Who are they that dare oppose us ? If I am ordered I will go and bring the fellow's head who is pointing the gun yonder."

"Amin !" said the Sultan, quietly ; "be it so—you have volunteered—go ! Stir not, Kasim Ali, but remain here ; we may require you."

The officer addressed his men for a few moments, formed them up as he could on the narrow wall, and placing himself at their head, with loud cries of "Alla Yár !" he dashed on, followed by any who had collected during the pause. Those in the enclosure reserved their fire till they were near. Then they fired the cannon, which had been crammed full of bullets, and the officer and half his men fell. The remainder having fired a volley at random, turned and fled as hastily as they could on that narrow, crowded way.

The Sultan was speechless with rage for some moments. "Order on the next corps !" he shouted at last ; "that unworthy one shall be disgraced. Before my very eyes to behave thus ! Do not stay to fire," he cried to its commander who came up. "upon them with the steel ! Were you English, you would carry the place—you are of the true faith, will ye not fight better ?"

"Let me head this attack," cried Kasim, for others appeared to hang back ; "on my head and eyes be it—I will carry the place or die in the effort !"

"Remain here !" exclaimed the Sultan fiercely, "are you, too, rebellious ? remain and shoot if you will, we may need you. Let them go whose duty it is."

"It is your order !" exclaimed the officer who had been addressed, "I will either carry it or die."

Again the advance was made, while those in the tower kept up an incessant fire, the Sultan himself

aiming frequently ; but they had now to face men emboldened by success. The division was allowed to advance nearly to the same place as the former had done ; and again the fatal cannon, loaded almost to the muzzle with grape, was fired. A loud shout from the enemy followed. The execution was terrible ; the survivors hesitated for a moment, then turned and fled, leaving a heap of mangled and writhing forms between them and the enemy.

The retreating body met another which was hurrying on to their assistance, and the confusion became hopeless. Blows and bayonet-thrusts were even exchanged on the narrow wall, and many a man fell wounded or maimed by the hands of his fellow-soldiers, while only the powerful could keep possession of the passage. On a sudden arose a cry of "The road ! the road !" and as if the means of escape were thus open, the whole, for a great distance down the wall, turned and fled.

The Sultan saw the action. He tore his hair, threw his turban on the ground, shouted, screamed till he was hoarse. But his voice was lost in the cries of thousands, the oaths, the groans, and the rattle of musketry from behind. Accompanied by Kasim and his personal attendants, he flung himself upon the crowd and, with drawn sword, tried to withstand the torrent of men that poured backwards. It was all in vain. He was at last overpowered and, accompanied by Kasim and a few of the strongest of his slaves, he was borne on with the crowd. No one heeded him, in the confusion he had lost his turban by which he was usually known, and his soldiers could not distinguish him from one of themselves.

Thus it was that the throwing down of the wall was interrupted. The cry from the panic-stricken multitude, re-echoed by the advancing troops, rose upon the air with a deafening sound, "The road ; the road !" all shouted, and hurried to where they expected to have seen it completed. The narrow

stream met from two opposite directions, pouring on, urged by the energy of despair from behind. Two extremes met; there was no time for thought—not a second. Those who were first had hardly looked into the ditch and seen there only a heap of stones instead of a road, and those thirty feet below the mere, with one wild cry to God, they were pushed into it by those behind, whose turn was to come next. A few there were—men of desperate strength—who clung to the battle-ents with the tenacity of despair; a few who, drawing their swords, turned and tried to cut their way through the mass. Vain effort! force was met by force, for the danger was not perceived till the men were on the brink and were pushed over; those in the rear thought they had escaped, and no warning cry was heard.

The multitude poured on. Ten thousand men had to pass by that place. Those who leaped, lay at the bottom, many maimed, others crushed and entangled amidst the thorny briars and thick grasses. The mass at the bottom of the ditch gradually increased, and a road arose, not of the ruins of the wall, but a mass of human bodies: those uppermost struggling in agony for life, those underneath already at rest in death.

The Sultan and his companions were hurried on. Kasim had a dread of what he should see—a sickening feeling, as the shrieks and curses which arose from that horrible spot fell upon his ears as they approached. They could do nothing, however, for to turn was impossible. To leap from the walls into the midst of the enemy would have been death, for they pursued the flying army with exulting shouts, and pressed close upon the flanks and rear with their long spears. By the road there was a chance of life—a chance only.

They reached the brink. "Way for the Sultan! aid the Sultan! rescue your King!" shouted Kasim with his utmost energy, while he dealt blows right and left, as did also the others with him, to stay the

crowd even for an instant. The Sultan looked down on the horrible heap, which, wildly agitated, was heaving with the convulsions of those beneath it; he appeared to turn sick and stagger, and Kasim observed it.

"For your life," cried he, "Lal Khan and so e more of you keep together, or he is lost! Now leap with me!" and as the Sultan still hesitated, Kasim seized him by the arm and threw himself from the brink.

Now began a fresh struggle—one for life or death, in which only the strongest prevailed. For an instant Kasim was stunned by the shock, but he saw Lal Khan trying to help on the Sultan, whose features wore the hue of despair, and he made a mighty effort to aid him. The footing upon the heaving mass was unsteady and insecure. In the wild despair of death, the struggling beings below clung to the legs of those above them, and thus the weak were drawn down to destruction. But Kasim Ali and those who followed him were powerful men, and raising the almost senseless body of the Sultan in their arms, and spurning many a feeble and exhausted wretch beneath their feet, they bore it with immense exertions across the ditch. Kasim had just time to lay the Sultan, who was groaning heavily, on the ground, when he heard a sharp rattle of muskets and felt a cold stinging pain in his shoulder and all down his back. The next moment a deadly sickness overpowered him, and he sank unconscious to the ground.

3.—*The Rescue of Kasim.*

The main part of the army, which was making a pretence of attacking the gate, had heard, faintly, the noise of distant firing. But this did not disturb the leaders, who were simply waiting for the moment when their victorious Sultan would arrive, driving the defeated defenders of the wall before him. Then

the gates would be opened, and the mass of cavalry would rush in to complete the ruin and destruction.

At length several horsemen came galloping at full speed, their horses panting with fatigue and heat. Abdul Rahman Khan and many others rode to meet them.

"What news?" they cried; "where are the army and the Sultan? why do you look so wildly?"

"Alas!" answered an officer, as he reined up his foaming horse, "the army is defeated, and we much fear the Sultan is lost!" And in answer to their excited inquiries, he told them in broken sentences, the terrible story.

They asked no more questions, and each looked at his fellow with silent shame and vexation. One by one the leaders drew off, and in a short time division after division left the ground, and returned towards the camp; a few only daring to meet the defeated host, which soon began to pour by hundreds into it, exhausted, humbled, full of shame.

Among the first was the Sultan; for the elephants had, at a little distance, kept a parallel line with the wall. One was easily procured for him, and having been lifted upon it, he was rapidly borne to the camp; but he was unattended, and arrived at his tents almost unknown and unobserved.

But the loud drum soon sounded, and men knew that he was safe. But though it was the signal that the Durbar was open, and that he expected their presence, few went to him, or cared to meet him in the temple which they knew must possess him. The Khan was among the first who entered. His low salaam was almost disregarded, and he took his seat, pitying the Sultan's shame and mortification, which was fully expressed on his sullen countenance.

One by one, however, the leaders of the divisions which had remained behind entered, and took their places in silence. None dared to speak; and the restless eyes of the monarch, wandered from one to another round the assembly, as if searching for some excuse to break forth into the rage which evidently

possessed hi , and which was increased by the pain of a sprain of his ankle. There was a dead silence, so unusual in his Durbar , and the words which were spoken by the attendants to one another were uttered in a whisper. Now and then the Sultan rubbed his ankle impatiently, and knit his brows when the pain was severe ; or else he sat silent, looking round and round. The bravest of those present used to say afterwards that they waited to see who would be first sacrificed to his vengeance. The silence was insupportable ; at last Nadím Khan, his favourite and chief flatterer, ventured to speak.

" May Allah and the Prophet ease the pain you are suffering, O Sultan ! " he said , " can your slave do anything to relieve it ? "

" Oh, rare bravery to speak ! " cried the Sultan with bitterness ; ' you were not with me, Nadím Khan, to partake of the abomination we have eaten this day ! No, you did volunteer to be with the division without the gate, that your fine clothes and fine horse might be seen by the defenders of the wall Verily your destiny is great, that you were not among that crowd, nor struggling with that heap of—Pah ! Where is Kasim Ali Patél ? " he continued after a pause ; " why is he not present ? and Lal Khan also ? "

" Kasim Ali Jemadar, *Hazrút !* " cried Lal Khan advancing, " has not been seen since—"

" Not been seen ! " thundered the Sultan, attempting to rise, and sinking back in pain,— " not been seen ! and you to tell me this ! Lal Khan had you not too aided me, you should have been scourged till the skin was cut from your back. Begone ! you and your companions—seek hi , dead or alive, and bring him hither to me."

" Asylum of the world ! he lies, if he be killed, among the dead upon the edge of the ditch, and the enemy is in possession of the walls, and—"

" Begone ! " roared the Sultan.

" *Hazrút !* " said the old Khan, rising and joining his hands, hardly able to speak, for his grief was

choking him ; " if your slave has his dismissal, he will accompany Lal Khan in search of—" He could not finish the speech, and the big tears rolled down his rough face upon his beard

"Go, Rahman Khan," said the Sultan, evidently touched by his emotion ; "may you be successful." And again he relapsed into silence, as the two officers departed on their almost hopeless errand

"The tiger will have blood before he is pacified," whispered Bakir Sahib, who had arrived, and now sat near Nadim. "I pray God it may be none of this assembly !"

The rescue party under Abdul Rahman Khan and Lal Khan hurried on as fast as horses could carry them to find Kasim Ali, or his dead body. It was dark before they reached the fearful place where the terrible disaster had occurred, and for hours they searched with torches among the hundreds of corpses. Kasim had been wounded about mid-day ; and there seemed little chance that he could be alive after so many hours.

At last in reply to their repeated shouts of "Kasim Ali !" the searchers thought they heard a faint cry.

"Some one answered !" shouted the torch-bearer.

"Where ? for the sake of God," cried the Khan from his horse.

"Yonder, in front."

"Quick, run !" was the reply, and all hurried on, looking to the right and left.

They heard the cry again, quite near ; and the next moment the broad glare of the torch fell on Kasim Ali, lying stretched out on the ground like one dead.

All rushed towards him, and the old Khan throwing himself recklessly from his horse, ran eagerly to his side and gazed in his face. Kasim's eye was dim, and his face and body were covered with blood ; but the features were well known to him, and the old soldier, unable to repress his emotion,

fell on his knees beside him, and raising his clasped hands wept aloud.

"Thanks be to God!" he cried at last, when he could speak, "he lives! my friend, he lives!" Then turning to Kasim, he continued—

"Do not speak, Kasim Ali, my son. You will live. We will tend you as a child. Do not stir hand or foot." (Kasim had clasped the Khan's hand, and was trying to raise it to his lips :) "no thanks, no thanks—not a word! are you not dear to us? Gently, now, my friends, gently, so, raise him up—now the palankin here, 'tis the Khanum's own, Kasim—never heed his blood," he added, as some of the bearers strove to put their waistbands under him. "Gently, gently! Take care! well done! Are you easy, Kasim? are the pillows right?—what, too low? you cannot breathe?—now, are they better?—nay, speak not, I understand your smile;" and truly it was one of exquisite pleasure which overspread his face.

"What, water?" he continued, as Kasim motioned to his open mouth, "he can have had none here all day. Quick, bring some! There," he said, filling a cup with the sparkling and cool fluid, "drink!"

The fevered Kasim clutched it as though it had contained the water of Paradise, cup after cup was given him, and he was refreshed. The flower of life which had well nigh withered, was revived once more and hope again sprang up in his breast.

"Go on with easy steps," cried the Khan to the bearers, "I will give you a sheep to-morrow if you carry him well and quickly."

"On our head and eyes be it," said the chief of the bearers, and they set forward.

The men on the wall fired a few random shots at the party, but they were too distant to aim with effect, and it went on rapidly. The journey of some miles was a severe trial to the exhausted Kasim, and they were several times obliged to rest. But they reached the summit of the last hill after some hours,

and the welcome sight of the huge camp below, the white tents gleaming brightly in the moonlight, among which hundreds of watchfires were sparkling, greeted the longing eyes of Kasim. In a few minutes more they had arrived at the Khan's own tent, and he was lifted from the palankin, and laid on soft bedding which had been prepared within. The place was cleared of those who had crowded round; and although Kasim's eyes were dizzy, and the tent reeled before him, he was conscious that the gentle voices which were around him, the shrouded forms which knelt by him, and the soft hands which washed the hard and clotted blood from him, were those of Ameena's women.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW THE KHAN'S WIVES PLOTTED MISCHIEF.

1.—Kasim in Danger.

Tippu Sultan was suffering severe pain in his sprained ankle ; but when he heard that Kasim Ali had arrived in the camp badly wounded, he could not resist the desire of seeing the man who had saved his life. So he went, quite unattended, in a palankin to Abdul Rahman Khan's tent, and sent orders for his own chief physician to meet him there.

Such an honour was quite unexpected by the Khan and his household. Nevertheless the Sultan was received with respect, carried into the tent, and set down by the side of the bed where Kasim lay unconscious. The women servants were bathing the wound with warm water under the direction of Meeran, while her brother, Zulfikar, was busy preparing a poultice for the wound.

The Sultan regarded Kasim intently before he spoke to the Khan, and several times, stooping down, felt his pulse and head.

"He will yet live," he said, "we, the chosen of the Prophet, are counted to have much skill in the treatment of wounds, and therefore we say he will live ; his pulse is strong and firm, and he is not going to die"

"God forbid," echoed all around.

The Hakim shortly afterwards came in and began carefully to examine the patient. He had evidently but little hope, and shook his head with a melancholy air when he had made his examination.

"There is no hope of his life," said the old man. "I have seen many shot, but a man never survived such a wound—his liver is pierced and he must die."

"I tell you, no ! Murad Ali," said the Sultan ; " we have had dreams about him of late, his destiny we know is linked with our own, and we are alive. We shall yet see him on horseback."

For several days Kasim seemed to hang between life and death. But at last the devoted nursing of Meeran and her brother, Zulfikar, aided by his own strong constitution, won the day , and Kasim lived.

Weeks, nay months, passed. Kasim's recovery was slow and painful , it was long ere he could even sit up, and speak without pain and spitting of blood. But as his strength enabled him to do so, he was allowed to sit for a while, then to crawl about, a shadow of his former self

Meanwhile the Sultan had been a severe sufferer. The sprain of his foot was acutely painful, and subsided only after a tedious confinement, during which his temper had been more than usually bad. The failure of his noble embassy to Turkey, the immense sum it had cost him, the continued preparations of the English, the Mahrattas, and the Nizam, and their united power, pressed on him with force and occupied his thoughts by day and his dreams by night.

He had summoned the heaviest of his artillery from Seringapatam, and in time he had completed a breach in the wall some hundred yards in extent, which invited attack. At length it was made. Opposition there was none, and the army, thirsting for revenge and plunder, poured upon the now defenceless territory of Travancore.

But the necessities of his position began at length to press hard upon the mind of the Sultan. He was far from his capital ; in his present condition he was unable to strike a blow against his enemies ; and though he had endeavoured to mislead the English by plausible letters, and professions of undiminished friendship, yet he knew that they were steirly preparing for war against him

At last, therefore, he gave orders that the great wall should be pulled down and destroyed, so as to

make it useless for defence again. When this had been done, he and his army returned to the capital.

2.—*Ameena in Danger.*

A few days after the army had arrived in Seringapatam, the Khan's first two wives were sitting talking in their apartments. The town was full of bustle, activity and life, where of late all had been dull and spiritless; but the return of the army had brought no joy to these two women.

"Have you seen Ameena since she arrived?" asked Hoormut.

"No—why do you ask me of one so hateful?" Kummoo replied. "Do you think I would go to seek her?"

"I think you would not; but I heard that she had received rich presents from the old dotard, and I went to see them. It was true, they are superb."

"What are they? Presents! and we have not even clothes fit to wear."

"There were shawls and silks, and jewels too," returned Hoormut; "and a goldsmith sat in the verandah making gold anklets, whose weight must be immense. I tell you we are fools to bear this, and continue to be polite to them. Have you seen the Khan of late?"

"No," replied Kummoo, "we are thrown by and neglected now, for her. We might have expected that it would come to this, when we received her as if she was welcome."

"And yet your mother counselled that it should be so," said Hoormut.

"She did; she thought that by means of the law we might get rid of her. But it seems there is no hope; for a man may have four wives lawfully, and this was a regular marriage, the Khan has the papers. But my mother will aid us; trust me that she loves me too well not to resent the insult which

has been offered me. That should be her palankin crossing the square ! It may be coming hither. It is—it is !” she exclaimed, as she looked from the window, “it has stopped at the gate. She must have news for us, that she comes out from home.”

The old lady’s heavy tread was soon heard on the stairs, and both flew to meet her at the door. As she entered she embraced both cordially, and they led her to the seat of honour.

A *hooka* was quickly brought, and as soon as she had taken breath, she began to smoke and to speak.

“And are you well, Kummoo-bee ?” she said to her daughter. “You are thin you used to be fatter. Your servant, Sozun, came to me a short time ago, and said you were low-spirited, so I have come to see you.”

“I have little to do but eat vexation,” said Kummoo with a pout, “have I not a rival ? and is not that enough to make my days unhappy and my nights sleepless ?”

“Is there no means of turning him from her ?” said Hoormut, drawing nearer, “you, my mother, once said you had a woman servant who was wise and could command spells, could she not aid us ?”

“She is ill,” said the old lady, “then she was well. She was preparing the charms necessary for her purpose when the Khan left on service. They have been neglected since then, but she may be able to resume them. I will inquire of her.”

“Could you not send for her, mother ?” said Kummoo.

“She is ill—nevertheless she may come. Yes, let the palankin go, and here is my ring let her know that she is wanted.”

Kummoo hurried to the door, and dispatched a slave with the ring and a message in her mother’s name.

When the old woman arrived, they explained the situation to her, and what they wanted her to do.

“You see the trouble they are in, Kuireena,” said Kummoo’s mother, in conclusion.

"Enough!" cried the crone; "can we be alone here when the time comes, of which I will forewarn you?"

"We can," said Kummoo, "without a chance of interruption."

"Good—but no, it will be better done yonder, at your mother's. there all can be prepared."

"It will be less dangerous there," said the old lady; "you can do your work in the closet which is off the private room. And when, Kureena-tæe, will you be ready?"

"In a month, perhaps: the spell is a heavy one to work, and requires preparation and thought, lest anything should be omitted. You must send Fatehas to the shrine, feed Fakirs in your presence, eat cooling victuals, and abstain as much as may be from meat. Thus you will be prepared. But on me will fall the sore fast and penance. It is hard for an old woman to endure, but you are in an evil strait, and I would be ungrateful for years of protection from your house, Kummoo-bee, and for the salt I have eaten, if I refused you my aid. And now bid me depart, for I have much to do ere night."

"God bless you!" then cried both the ladies, leading her to the door, "we trust to you, mother; do not forget us." In a few minutes the sound of the bearers was heard, as they rapidly traversed the street below them.

"She is as true as a soldier's sword," said Kummoo's mother, who had been almost a silent listener to the conversation; "she will not disappoint you."

"Ha!" said Kummoo, "I feel as though I had that hated girl within my grasp, and could crush her."

"Hush!" said her mother, "you should not hate so."

"I hate as I love mother, and those who reject the one, provoke the other; you should know me by this time."

Her mother was silent ; she knew well the temper of her daughter, and her uncontrollable passions. " It is their destiny," she thought, " let them work it out ; I dare not oppose it." And when the palankin returned, she took her leave.

CHAPTER XV

HOW JAFFAR SAHIB GOT INTO TROUBLE.

1.—Kasim's Accusation.

Kasim Ali gradually recovered strength, and took up his secretarial work for his patron again. It was while he was working as the Khan's Secretary that he once more came across Jaffar Sahib, his old enemy.

In examining the regimental accounts, Kasim Ali fancied he had at length found a clue to Jaffar Sahib's system of cheating. He was about to bring it to the notice of his commander, when the Khan handed him one day a letter he had received from the Paymaster of the army, who, it seemed, had detected the false accounts the Jemadar had furnished.

"The worst of all is," said the Khan, after they had spoken a long while upon the subject, "the demand which the Government will make upon me for the arrears of this fraud, for it has evidently gone for a long time."

"For years, Khan Sahib," replied Kasim; "here they give you the dates. I think I had better go over to the Paymaster, and get access to the whole of the accounts which have been made out, we may perhaps detect the whole matter, and trace it to its source."

"A wise thought, Kasim—I will go with you. But that the honour of Rahman Khan is too well known, this might brand me for ever with infamy."

After several days' investigation, their suspicion fell upon Munshi Nasir-ud-Din, as the papers seemed to be in his handwriting. This seemed to throw a new light upon the subject. They knew that the Munshi was still attached to the person of Jaffar

Sahib as a kind of secretary, for he could not write himself, and it became a matter of great importance to separate him if possible from the Jemadar. This was not difficult to manage. A few men of the regiment always remained with the Khan, under the charge of Dilawar Ali Duffadar the rough old soldier we have before mentioned. He bore the Jemadar no very good will, and readily undertook to carry off the Munshi, unknown to his protector, and bring him to the city.

The arrival of the Munshi was a source of true joy to the Khan and Kasim. At first, as might be expected, he knew, or pretended to know, nothing about the matter. But a threat of torture soon brought him to his senses, and he unfolded secretly to the Khan and Kasim the whole of the deceits which had been practised from the first. Every account was gone through, and a fearful array of fraud registered against the Jemadar, who was commanded to make the best of his way to the city to answer the complaint against him. Before the messenger reached the camp, however, the Jemadar had arrived at the city; for his active agents had traced the arrival of Dilawar Ali and his party, and their sudden departure, and it was evident that they must have carried off the Munshi.

The detection of his long concealed and successful cheating was a thunderbolt to the Jemadar. The Khan refused to see him, or to hear any excuses he had to urge.

"That I should have been foiled by that boy!" he said aloud as he quitted the house; "that I should have been destined to devour such abomination! that I, Jaffar Sahib, should have been thus trampled upon! May God grant me power of revenge. Yea, his blood will hardly wipe out the insult I have suffered. Yes, tell him so," he cried to a woman who, he thought, watched him; "tell him so—tell him Jaffar Sahib curses him, and, as there is a light in heaven, will have his revenge for what has happened."

"Jaffar Sahib!" cried the woman, rushing forward; "you cannot be he? you cannot be he whom I thought dead years ago?"

"Begone! I know you not, you are one of his followers, and I curse you," and flinging her off, for she had clung to his arm, so violently that she stumbled against a stone and fell, he strode on at a rapid pace.

She arose slowly, and looked after him as he hurried on, "It must be he," she said, "his look when he was excited, his very tones, his name too, all are his Jaffar Sahib! that name has not sounded in mine ears since we met last, when the bright moon was above us, and the trees cast their deep shade over us. He did not remember Sozun! how should he? Years have passed since we were young. And to meet thus, when I had thought him dead long, long ago, and mourned him in my heart! What destiny is this before me? Be it what it may," she continued, walking a few paces, "I will see him, and he shall know that Sozun still lives."

Jaffar Sahib had but one resource left. To urge the Khan again was impossible, and against Kasim his desire of revenge became more wild every moment. "My only refuge is in the Sultan, I will go to him and confess my fault. If I am unfortunate, there is no worse to be feared than if I were proceeded against publicly. I may be fortunate and prevent all." And meditating how he should open his statement, he arrived before the gate of the palace, and entered it hastily. Being well known, no opposition was made to him, and he passed on to the apartment of those who waited upon the Sultan.

After waiting some time, he was told the Sultan would see him.

2—*The Sultan's Sentence*

Jaffar Sahib hesitated for a moment at the door, for he had looked through a chink, and seen that there

was a frown on the Sultan's brow, and that peculiar expression about his mouth which was always the forerunner of mischief, but there was no time allowed him for reflection. The Sultan had heard and called to him, and the Jemadar, hastily entering, at once threw himself at full length flat on the ground before him, with his arms and legs extended, and lay there motionless and silent.

"Why, what ails you? We thought you were at the camp. Why have you come here without leave? Why have you transgressed orders."

"Pardon, O Asylum of the World!" cried the Jemadar, not daring to look up, "your slave's fault is great, and his liver is turned to water; I crave forgiveness before I can tell my errand. My lord is generous—he will forgive, and will not punish the error of his slave."

"Get up and tell your tale, do not lie snivelling there."

"*Hazrit!*" said the Jemadar, scarcely able to speak for fear, "you may order me to be blown away from a gun, if what I say be not true."

"Well!" exclaimed the Sultan, "what more?"

"I am disgraced—my character is gone—I have no friend—no, not one. Rahman Khan and his favourite Kasim Ali have leagued together to blast my reputation and to ruin me."

"Hold!" cried Tippu, "the one is a man I am proud to call my friend, the other saved my life; beware how you name them."

"May I be your sacrifice! you may hang me if it be not the truth, listen and judge. When I was with the camp, engaged in the Sarkar's affairs, my Munshi, a humble man, disappeared. Your slave thought he had been murdered, and became uneasy. He discovered in a few days that the Khan had sent a party of the regiment and carried him away privately. Since then he and Kasim Ali have kept him here, tortured him, and made him draw up a declaration that your slave had made false accounts."

"Ha!" said the Sultan; "but go on."

"Yes, false accounts, protector of the poor! I who have fed on the Sarkár's bounty, I who have eaten the Sarkár's salt,—that I should do so base an act!"

"Peace!" exclaimed the Sultan; "I see by your eye, Jaffar Sahib, that you are guilty; there is no hiding truth from me. Do you not tremble as I read your heart in your eye, and see that you are a thief? Yes, you do wince—the thief of the Government, the Gift of God. Shall I have you taken into the square, and set in a high place, and a proclamation made that you are a thief?"

"Enough! enough,—O fountain of mercy!" said the trembling wretch; "enough, I beseech you by my long and faithful service to forgive me, to pardon the past, to keep me from shame. I am your slave, I lick the dust of your feet!"

The Sultan looked sternly at him for some minutes. "Very good," he said at last, "this time I will pardon, because of your great services in the past. You are free to go, and we shall desire Abdul Rahman Khan to suspend his proceedings. But you shall pay to our treasurer eight thousand rupees by to-morrow at this time. If not, it will be worse for you."

"I call the Prophet to witness," cried Jaffar Sahib, "I have not half the quarter of that sum; five hundred I might perhaps—"

"Peace!" exclaimed the Sultan; "how dare you swear to a lie in the presence of the friend of the Apostle? I have spoken."

"I have it not—where am I to find such a sum?"

"In hell!" roared the Sultan, "where I will send you to seek it, if you delay one moment beyond the time. Begone!"

Jaffar Sahib silently made his obeisance, and retired burning with shame and anger, and renewed threats against Kaśim, the author of all. He did not wait to speak to those in the ante-chamber, but hurried at once to his temporary lodging in the bazaar.

Jaffar Sahib reached his abode with feelings it would be difficult to describe. The money was but a trifle to him in amount, for in his career of rapacity and plunder he had amassed thousands, but it was so lent out among bankers, the men of the regiment, and those of the bazaar, that he feared he should hardly be able to raise it in time to meet the Sultan's demand, and without it he had little hope of mercy. As he 'dismounted from his horse, his attendant Madar met him.

"A woman is within," he said, pointing to the door of the apartment, "she came here a short while ago, and would take no denial, saying she would wait for you."

"A woman! What does she want?"

"God knows!" replied the man, "your worship will see, she is veiled from head to foot"

"Most strange! Away with you all - it may be the matter is private, and we would be alone" As he spoke, he entered the door. There was a small room at the back of the open shop he had hired, a door led from that into a small court, where was a shed for cooking or bathing, and a low verandah. There was no one in the room, he opened the door and looked around. Close beside it, in the verandah, sat a woman, veiled from head to foot in a thick sheet; she appeared to be trembling violently, for the covering was much agitated.

"Who are you," cried the Jemadar, "who come at this unseasonable hour?" She did not reply, and he spoke again more roughly.

"God be merciful to me! Jaffar," she exclaimed, throwing herself at his feet, and clasping his knees, while she cast the veil from her, "it is indeed you! have you forgotten Sozun?"

"Sozun! Sozun!" he repeated, as he drew his hand across his forehead, "she of Salem? Have you risen from the dead? is this a dream?"

"No! no! look on me. My features are wasted, but I am the same, you spurred me a while ago

like a dog, and my heart was broken. There was kindness between us once, Jaffar!" and she sighed deeply

"I knew you not," he said, raising her up. "I had been maddened! insulted by that dog of a Patel Kasim Ali. I knew you not, Sozun."

"Ha! do you know him?"

"To my cost; he and his dotard patron, Rahman Khan, have robbed me of money—vilified my character, but enough, 'tis no affair of yours. Why do you ask?"

"I have too a reckoning to settle with him, but let it pass, we shall speak of that which once was pleasant to us. You have not forgotten me then, Jaffar?"

"God is my witness—never! But can you come hither this night at dusk, unobserved? then we will speak of past times, now I have affairs of moment to settle, and must begone."

"I will come surely," was the reply, "your voice is music in mine ears after so long a separation."

"Follow me then, and I will dismiss you openly before my servants, but be sure you do not fail to-night."

Now Sozun was the confidential servant of Kummoo, the Khan's wife. She was a cunning woman, who knew all her mistress's secrets and who kept her favour by helping her in all her petty intrigues. She knew, of course, of Kummoo's hatred of Ameena, and when she returned to the Khan's house she told her mistress of her adventure with Jaffar Sahib.

"And Jaffar Sahib hates Kasim Ali," she said, with meaning, at the end of her tale, "and would give much to see him ruined."

"Kasim Ali? the young Patel? the Khan's friend?" said Kummoo. "What has that to do with me?"

"Kasim Ali is young and handsome, and Ameena is beautiful," said Sozun, with a sly look. "He has saved

her life twice, and he must have met her, and then—do you not see Kummoo-bee?”

“But this is only suspicion,” said Kummoo. Sozun tossed her head and laughed. “She has been discreet,” she sneered.

“Ha!” cried Kummoo, “If only we could find out. We will watch, Sozun. If only the Khan’s suspicions can be aroused, this girl who is my curse will be ruined, and I shall be avenged. Yes, we will watch now, Sozun, will you not help me?”

“To the last,” replied the wicked servant.

Sozun was well satisfied. If this little plot succeeded, she would at once please her mistress, and her old lover, Jaffar Sahib, whom she had found again after so many years

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW THE ENGLISH CAME TO SERINGAPATAM.

I.—The Search for a Friend.

On the day that Jaffar Sahib had his interview with the Sultan, Tippu had received from the English Governor at Madras a stern remonstrance upon his attack upon Travancore, which was under the protection of the East India Company, and a threat of war. The following morning Tippu held a Durbar, at which it was decided to defy the English and their allies, the Mahrattas and the Nizam; and the next day the Mysore army marched out of Seringapatam to meet the invaders. What is known as the Third Mysore War had begun.

Kasim Ali was not yet strong enough to take part in the campaign, and he remained in the capital, but Ameena, at her earnest request, went with her husband, the Khan. In the absence of the army, therefore, the spiteful plots of the Khan's wives could not be carried out, and had to wait awhile.

This is not the place to describe the campaign. It is enough to say that Lord Cornwallis, the Governor-General, and his army, finding the passes undefended, ascended without difficulty into Mysore, and after some skirmishes with the Sultan's troops, besieged and took Bangalore. Tippu retreated upon his capital, but before the English army could follow him, it was necessary to take and garrison some small forts in the neighbourhood.

One of the staff officers in the English army was that Philip Dalton whom poor Herbert Compton had described to Kasim Ali as his chief friend. Since the day, now eight years before, when he had parted from Compton at Bednur, Dalton had heard

nothing of his friend. When some of the English prisoners were released in 1784, Compton was not among them, and Philip Dalton had almost given him up as dead. There was a faint hope, however, that he might still be alive in captivity, and Dalton determined to take the opportunity of the English army's advance to find out, if possible, what was his fate. He was the more eager to do this as in the meantime he had married Herbert Compton's sister, and had brought out with him from England as a junior officer young Charles Hayward, who was the brother of the lady to whom Compton had been betrothed.

When the army lay encamped near Balapur, one of the forts they had captured, several officers visited the famous rock of Kabal Drûg from which prisoners used to be flung by the orders of the Mysore Sultans; and one day Philip Dalton and Charles Hayward rode out to see it, accompanied by a few mounted orderlies.

A feeling of sickening fear grew upon them as they approached it, and a thought would force itself upon Philip, in spite of his hopes and prayers to the contrary, that Herbert's fate might have been the dreadful one experienced by the hundreds whose whitened bones and skulls lay around the foot of the rock; but he did not mention this to his companion, and they rode on in silence. At length they reached the rock, and, leaving their horses below, climbed to the top, where still stood the small hut or house we have once mentioned. But this did not attract their notice at first, the fatal brink, which had witnessed the frantic death-struggles of so many, was the spot to which they were led by the orderlies, who had a hundred marvellous tales to tell of events that happened there, and of the tremendous strength of those whose business it was to hurl the victims from the precipice. They looked over, too, and saw the bones and skulls scattered at the bottom, and shreds

of white calico and red cloth fluttering among the bushes—the sad evidence of the fate of brave soldiers who had perished there. There was nothing there to make them want to remain, and Philip and his young friend turned away sickened from the spot.

“And this is the place where the unfortunate persons were confined,” said an orderly, who, pushing open a rude and half-broken door, led them into the mean and half ruined room.

“Good God ! it is covered with the names of poor fellows who have died here,” exclaimed Philip , “what if *his* should be here ? we must not leave an inch unexamined, Charles.”

“Why, do you think he was ever here ?” asked the young man, in an agitated tone.

“God forbid ! but it is our duty to look , we may possibly gain a clue.”

And they fell to examining the walls carefully. It was a painful task ; there were many names , the hands which had written them were now dry bones bleaching without, or had long ago mouldered into dust. Many were the humble prayers written there, and curses mingled with them in strange combination. Many a direction, too, for parents and wives and children of those who were dead, in case others might visit the spot, and bear them to the far west.

“Heavens !” exclaimed young Hayward suddenly ; “Come here, Philip ! quick !”

Dalton darted across the room, and Charles pointed to a small writing scratched in the plaster with a pin or nail ; it was plain even to his swimming eyes and sickened heart.

“*Herbert Compton.*”

May 24, 1789. Many have been thrown from this abode of death , I have waited my turn ; it will come

to-morrow, it will deliver me from a life of misery and—"

There was no more—a stone flung against the wall had hit the rest and blotted it out.

Philip sank down and groaned aloud. That there should be such an end to his hopes, was hard indeed to bear. Charles strove to comfort him, but both their hearts were sick, and they were poor comforters one to another.

"There may be farther trace of him," said Philip, "let us look around."

They did so. For a while they found nothing, but at length a joyful cry again broke forth from Charles. "God be praised!" he said, "come here and read, Philip."

The writing on the wall was rough and misshapen but they were characters of blessed hope to both the words were these —

"Captain Compton was taken away from this horrible place very ill, on the day of—

John Simpson."

"God be praised for this!" exclaimed Philip, as he fell on his knees and blessed Him aloud, "there is yet hope, for certainly he did not perish here, Charles."

"These are too precious to remain here, Charles," said Philip, "we must remove them." It was easily done, with their penknives they carefully cut round the plaster of each inscription, and then separated it from the wall without difficulty. "Ah! Philip, if we could only trace him further," said Charles.

"We thought not of this when we came hither," he replied, "and we should be thankful; it is just possible that someone in the town may have heard tidings of him if he were really ill, and we will go thither and inquire."

2.—News of a friend.

They did not tarry on the rock for an instant. Their horses awaited them at the bottom, and the

distance between the rock and the small town being quickly covered, they arrived in the bazaar. Here they spent several hours questioning the people; but no one was able, or willing, to give them any news of their friend. At last, just as they were going to depart, disappointed, they came across a man who used to attend upon the Sultan's officers who came to Balapur with prisoners. On being questioned he perfectly remembered an English officer who had been brought from the rock very ill and who had been taken care of by the old Fakir outside the town.

"Can you guide me to this Fakir?" said Philip to the man.

"Certainly," he replied, "it is but a short distance." And so saying he took up his staff, and led the two friends away.

Guided by the man, who ran before their horses they were quickly at the garden we have before mentioned. It had been respected by all, the little mosque was as purely clean, the space around it as neatly swept, as ever. The flowers bloomed around the tiny fountain, and the noble trees overshadowed all as closely as when, sick and exhausted, Herbert Compton lay beneath their shade, and blessed God that he had found such a refuge and such a friend as the old Fakir.

The venerable old man sat in his usual spot under the tamarind tree. Before him was his Koran, which he read in a monotonous tone; his face was very thin, and he looked weak and ill.

"*Salaam!*" said Philip advancing, "we are English officers, who would speak to you."

"*Salaam!*" returned the old man benignantly, "you are welcome. What seek you?"

"Father," said Philip, much touched by the benevolence of his tone and appearance, "you are no bigot, and will aid us if you can. I seek a lost friend, as dear to me as a brother. I know not if it be the same, but I have heard that one of y race

was tended by you, and remained ill with you for long, it may be he; did you know his name?"

"Holy Allah!" cried the old man eagerly, "are you anything to him who loved me as a son?"

"Alas! I know not his name, father."

"His name! it was—" and he fell to musing, his forefinger between his teeth. "I cannot remember it now," he said, "though it is daily on my lips. Ka—Ka—"

"Compton?" said Philip.

"The same! the same!" cried the old man, "the same—Compton—Captain Compton, the name is music to me, Sahib. I loved that youth, for he was gentle, and often told me of your cool and beautiful land in the distant west, where the sun goes down in glory; and he taught me to love the race I heard reviled and persecuted."

"God will reward you!" said Philip, "but can you tell me anything about his fate?"

"Alas! nothing. For a month he was with me, ill, very ill—we thought he would die, but the prayers of the old Fakir were heard, and the medicines of his hand were blessed. Then, when his strength returned, an order from the Sultan arrived, and it was a bold bad man that brought it, and he was taken away from me, and never since that have I gained any tidings of him. May his destiny have been good! My prayers have been night and day for him to that Being who is your God and mine."

Philip was much touched, and poured out his thanks to the old man most sincerely and with a full heart. "Alas! I fear all trace of him is lost," he said.

"Say not so, my son, I dread—but I hope. The Sultan is not always cruel—he is just. His death was never intended—his life was too valuable for that. He is most likely at Seringapatam, whither you are proceeding they say—I would not despair. And now listen; God has sent you hither, you who were his friend; he gave me a letter, a packet which he wrote here in secret. I would ere this have delivered it in

your camp, but I am grown very feeble and infirm of late, the effect of illness, and I could not walk so far. Will you receive it ?”

Eagerly Philip begged to see it, and the old man brought it from his house.

Philip took it with a delight he had no words to express, and was well nigh overpowered by his emotion as the familiar handwriting met his eye. “There can be no doubt,” he said, “that it was he—I would swear to his handwriting among a thousand.”

“Do not open it here,” said the Fakir : “but sit and speak to me of him and his parents, and his beloved ; for I heard all,” continued the old man with a sigh, “and pitied his sad fate.”

Long, long they talked together, and the day was fast declining ere they left him, promising to return whenever they could. They took away the precious packet with them, to pore over its contents together in Philip’s tent.

They opened it with eager anxiety ; it was addressed “To any English officer.” There were a few lines from Herbert, informing whomsoever should receive it that he was alive, and imploring him to forward it to the Government, and a few more descriptive of his captivity, of his escape from the rock, and his uncertainty for the future.

There were letters, too, to be forwarded, one to his father, one to his betrothed, another for Philip himself, which he opened impatiently. It was short—he said he dared not write much. He described his various trials and sufferings, and the kindness of the old Fakir, without whose aid he must have perished. He besought him not to despair of finding him alive, even though years should pass between that time and when the letter should reach him.

“Nor will I despair, dear Herbert,” cried Philip, “never, never ! Yet we must be secret ; these letters must not be delivered ; nor must our present success be known in England, till we can confirm the glad tidings, or for ever despair.”

There was not a day while the army remained there that the friends did not visit the old Fakir. They could not prevail on him to accept money : but there were articles which were of use to him—cloth, and blankets, and other trivial things, which he received gladly. They left him with sorrow, and with little hope that they should ever renew their intercourse with him. Yet they met again.

3—Hope Deferred.

The progress of the army was slow, for the forage, except in a few places, had been destroyed, and the carriage bullocks died by hundreds. The Nizam's force, too, had joined the British army, and it presented a most gorgeous eastern display, far more imposing than any Philip had yet seen. The force was utterly inefficient, however, for the purposes of the war, for the leader had no control over it, nor could he supply it with food, and his fidelity to the English cause, if not the Nizam's also, was doubtful.

At every day's march the distress of the army increased. Men were upon the lowest rations, the cavalry were almost useless from the starvation and weakness of their horses, and the active and irregular cloud of the Nizam's horse consumed what little forage was left in the country, long before it could be collected by the English.

Meanwhile the advance of the English, though he often pretended to despise it, was a source of the greatest alarm to the Sultan. In vain had he consulted the stars, in vain tried magical arts. They still advanced and drew nearer to his capital daily. Nevertheless he heard accounts of the distress and famine prevalent in the English camp, and could he only gain time, even by negotiation or by retreat, he might prolong the campaign so that the English would be obliged to retreat, and he would then pour upon them his whole force and destroy them for ever. Night after night was occupied in discussions with

his chief advisers, Mır Sadık, Kışan Rao, and Purnaiya, but their counsel was hardly listened to in the wild schemes which were revolving in his mind.

"Our government is the gift of God!" he would cry. "Are we not blessed with holy dreams, with visions of conquest, and of possessing the five kingdoms of Hind? Are all these for naught? Ah, you sceptics! Let the kafirs advance—they come into the snare. Ha, ha! their cattle are dying. How, Jaffar Sahib?"—he was present—"you saw them."

"My Lord! they are," replied Jaffar Sahib, "they can hardly drag the guns; even the men are harness-ed, and work like beasts."

"They will get tired of that, perhaps, soon. Let them come on, I say, even to the gates of the town. I fear not—why should I fear? my destiny is bright."

At last the English army came within sight of Seringapatam, and after some cavalry skirmishes, Tippu's army retreated to its fortified positions under the guns of the fort. But the distress in the English army was frightful, and there was no prospect of relief. There was no forage, most of the wells and tanks had been poisoned, and cattle and horses grew weaker and weaker, and died by the hundreds. There was no hope of victory against the efficient army of Tippu and his strong fort.

It was on the evening of that day that Philip Dalton and Charles Hayward climbed a small hill near the camp, and looked forth over the glorious view which was spread out before them. A few miles distant was the city, the tall minarets of the mosque in the fort, and here and there a small dome, with clusters of white-terraced houses, sparkling among the thick groves which surrounded them. The long lines of the regular walls of the fort, and their tall towers, could be seen; and in the plain before them redoubts were everywhere thrown up, between which the gay tents of the huge army glittered in the evening sun. The broad river Kaveri glittered where waters stood deep in pools, and its broad and rocky

bed could be seen around the fort and town, and stretching far away to the western hills. There was no bridge across the river, but with his telescope Philip could make out the ruins of that which had been destroyed.

Both were long silent, as they sat looking upon the prospect, for their thoughts were sad, and the hope which had filled their hearts when they had left Bangalore victorious, trusting soon to be before Seringapatam and to see the Sultan humbled, and the captives of years brought forth in triumph, had now given place to despair. For the delay even of a day was perilous to the whole army, and already the determination had been made of destroying the battering train, and retreating until a better system of supply for the army could be organised, and the strength of the exhausted cattle restored.

"Poor fellow!" said Philip—he was thinking of Herbert Compton as the city lay before him; "if he be imprisoned in a dungeon yonder, he will have heard our firing, he will have known of our advance, and we cannot imagine the state of anxiety and suspense he must be in, and how dreadful will be his disappointment."

"Are we then to retreat, Philip?"

"Yes, there is no other way at present. But we shall soon return. And for you, proud Sultan," he said, looking towards the city, "there is a severe reckoning in store. Oh, my poor Herbert! if you are there, may God preserve you to be delivered at our hands!"

But now the evening was fast closing in, and the fires of the Sultan's army were sparkling in the dusky plain. Gradually but quickly the city was fading before their sight, and the quiet pools of the Kaveri, wherein the sky was reflected, shone more brightly amidst the gloom around the city. There was no use in staying longer, and they arose and returned to the camp. In a few days, the army retreated towards Bangalore.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW KUMMOO WORKED HER WICKED WILL.

1.—Black Magic.

So long as the hurry and bustle of the arriving and departing troops, the preparations for siege, and the constant alarms of the English continued, the minds of all were occupied with the war—some swayed by hope, some by fear. Kummoo was like the rest, and because the objects of her hate were absent, she was powerless. But when once more all was fairly tranquil, her thoughts returned rapidly into their old channels; and as the Khan never now visited her, but, contented with Ameena, merely sent cold inquiries as to the state of her health, she detested her sister-wife more than ever.

From time to time she had urged her mother and her old servant to aid her in preparing the charms and spells which were to work Ameena's ruin. After long delays, caused partly by the timidity of the old woman and partly by her scruples of conscience, a night was fixed when they were to attend and assist in the ceremony.

It was with mingled feelings of awe and superstitious terror that the Khan's two wives went to the house of Kummoo's mother, on the day fixed for the incantation. As their food had been cooked by their own women in their own private apartments, they had been able to abstain from the various spices and foods which had been forbidden by the old woman. They had bathed as often as had been directed, and obeyed all the orders that had been laid upon them. The night was dark and gloomy, and was well suited for their walk to and from the

house unobserved. They hardly spoke, as, closely veiled, and under the guidance of Sozun, they entered the house, and at once passed on to the inner apartments.

"Do not delay," said Kummoo's mother, "She is within, in the chamber." They obeyed her, and entered it. It was a small square room; the floor was beaten clay, and had been most carefully swept; the walls and roof were quite bare, and there was nothing whatever in the apartment. The old woman sat at the head of a square figure, divided into many compartments, traced on the floor, in which were written many Arabic characters and ciphers. The figure was a rude imitation of a man, in square lines and crosses. The silence, the dim light of a miserable lamp, and the crouching figure of the old woman who was mumbling some words as her beads passed rapidly through her fingers, filled them with dread.

"So! you are come at last, children," she said, in answer to their benediction,

"Good! now attend: here is a knife, and I have here a white fowl; one of you must behead it and scatter the blood over the charm."

Both hesitated and trembled.

"Shame on you, cowards!" cried the old woman. "Shame! without this the charm is vain—the offering is vain! Without this, do you think they will attend to hear your commands?"

"Who, mother?"

"Who?—The powers that will work the spell. Obey! I tell you the time passes, and your livers will dry up instead of hers, if ye refuse to do this."

Both again hesitated, but Kummoo was daring; she at last seized the knife and the fowl, and, in very desperation, at one stroke severed the head from the body.

"Hold it fast!" cried the old woman, for its convulsive motions could hardly be restrained, "it bleeds well—that is a good sign; so now hold it there: let the blood sprinkle over all. They are

present now, "I feel they drink the blood." And she continued her incantation in a low tone while her hearers were paralysed with fear.

At length she spoke out aloud, and desired them to repeat the words! "O you who are present, having drunk blood, enter into her—into Ameena—and possess her! Let her have no rest by night or by day! As in each of your names I pierce this lime with five needles, so may your sharp stings pierce her heart! As they rot by the acid, so may her liver consume within her! Amin! Amin! Amin! Amin! Amin!" And as she pronounced each Amin! she stuck a needle through the green lime she held in her hand. "Enough!" she cried, "it is done! Leave this at her door, or at her bedside, that she may see it when she rises in the morning. You will soon hear of her."

They were glad to escape from the place, for guilt was in their hearts, and terror of the demons whom they believed to have been present. They did not even stay with the old lady, but hurried home as fast as was possible in the darkness. When all were asleep, Kummoo stole softly into the outer apartment of that where Ameena was, and placed the charmed lime at the threshold of the door, surrounding it with a circle of red powder, as she had been directed. The door opened inwards, so there was no fear that it would be displaced.

2—*Ameena is Bewitched.*

When Ameena opened the door in the morning she saw the sign on the floor before her with terror. A faint cry which she had uttered roused the Khan, who, darting to her side, beheld with equal or indeed greater dismay than hers, the dreadful sight.

A matter so trifling and absurd would in this enlightened age, only cause amusement, but to Ameena and her husband, who with their countrymen generally in these days, were filled with the

belief in jins, fairies, spirits of the air, and other supernatural agents and devils supposed to be at the command of any who understood magic, the sight was one of horror. The thought that their deaths were desired, the death of both, or certainly of one, first struck upon their hearts. A dull but a deadly blow it was to Ameena, to whom the first sight of the awful spectacle gave a terrible assurance that she was the person for whom it was intended.

The Khan could give her no comfort. She had no friend but her old nurse Meeran, who, even more superstitious than Ameena, and herself mistress as she thought of many potent charms, well knew the power which had directed such an one as that before them.

All that day dismay was in the household, all seemed equally struck with consternation. And the authors of the evil gave to Ameena their most hearty sympathy, while they secretly exulted over the deed, and saw that the arrow drove home to her very heart. In the general consultation which ensued, they gave it as their opinion that it could have been intended for no other than Ameena, and that her evil destiny had led her to look upon it.

Kasim Ali was sent for by the Khan, and with better sense than the rest, tried to argue him out of a belief that there was any danger, to assure him that no one could have ill-will to one so pure, so innocent and so unknown as his wife. But in his heart he suspected the author of the evil. He dared not, however, mention this, and there was no cause for suspicion except in his own thoughts.

Devoted to the Khan, and anxious for Ameena, of whose declining health, under the horrible idea that she was possessed by devils, he heard through the faithful Zulfikar from Meeran, Kasim Ali spared no pains to give such ease as he could by the performance of those ceremonies which were used in such cases. The most holy Fakirs were consulted; they made expeditions and offered gifts at all the saints'

and martyrs' tombs within reach, in her name. Lamp-charms were burned in her name, and she was fumigated with the smoke. Charmed words were written by holy Fakirs and Mullas, which she sometimes ate among her food ; at others they were washed off the paper into water which she drank.

But all these efforts brought no relief to poor Ameena. How often she pined for home—to lie on her mother's breast, and breathe away her life in happy repose ; and often she implored the Khan to send her thither.

"It is impossible," he said, "to travel ; the English hold the frontiers, the fierce marauding Mahrattas and the Nizam's forces hold the roads. No, my love, you must stay here. Such illnesses last long, but there is hope. The charms and spells will take effect, and you will again become strong, and well."

But as the days passed there was no improvement. And then a worse sorrow came upon her. Her wasted cheek, her dull hollow eyes, and the general fading of her beauty, gradually brought about a change in her husband's affections. She ceased to be attractive to him. His change to her was gradual, very gradual, but it could not be concealed. Along with the horrible imaginations which haunted her, the miserable feeling that she was being gradually deserted came upon her slowly, but too surely.

How Kummoo exulted in the success of her scheme ! She heaped presents upon the old woman by whose aid she had brought it about. She gave her jewels from her own stores, clothes of costly price, which the hag treasured up, though the grave was yawning to receive her.

Kasim Ali had been absent from the capital for some time, having been sent by the Sultan in command of a body of cavalry to take reinforcements to one of the distant forts that was besieged by the English. He was successful, and returned to Seringapatam with little loss.

It was during his absence that the Khan's change towards Ameena had become visible, and on his

return, in reply to his anxious questions as to whether she lived, he was told of her continued illness, and her fresh cause for misery. Alas! Kasım Alı could not aid her, except by messages of kindness through Zulfikar, and offers of service should she require or command them. How often did he long to remonstrate with the Khan upon his behaviour, to implore him to allow her to depart to her own home, but he dared not, that would have been impossible.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW JAFFAR SAHIB HAD HIS REVENGE.

1.—The Death Image.

Months had passed. The English Army, recruited and invigorated by the fine climate and the luxurious forage of Mysore, and, joined by the Nizam's troops under a new and more honest commander, and also by the Mahrattas, once more advanced upon the capital, in a far different condition to that in which they had before tried to capture it. As they proceeded, fort after fort fell before them. Nandidrúg, commanded by as brave an officer as the Sultan possessed, Lutf Ali Beg, fell, and few of the garrison escaped. Savandrúg—"the abode of death"—fell too. Tippu could not credit it, he raved like a wild beast when the news was brought, but that did not alter the loss, and it was followed by other reverses day after day. The resolute and rapid approach of the English army upon his capital was not to be disguised, and their unvaried success smote hard at his heart, and daunted his army. Discontent openly showed itself everywhere. there was a feverish excitement among the troops, a restless desire that the English should arrive, and their suspense be dispelled either by victory or defeat.

They arrived quickly enough. On the 5th of February 1792, the English army led by its noble commander, now more like a triumphal procession than a slow invasion, arrived on the distant heights, and were rapidly pouring from them upon the plain which led to the city. The Sultan, dreading an immediate attack, had ordered out the whole of his force, which in glittering array lined the fort-walls, the space before it, the banks of the river, and the

redoubts and batteries beyond It was a gorgeous spectacle

A few nights after, in a small chamber in the house of Kummoo's mother, sat Kummoo and the wretched old woman, her accomplice They spoke in low tones and whispers, and in dread, for the cannon of the English roared without, and was answered in loud peals from the walls of the fort. The siege had begun now two days the issue of the night attack of the 6th of February, and its effect upon the Sultan's army, causing nearly one-half of its number to desert and fly from a service they had long detested, are well known On the following morning twenty-three thousand were missing, and among them hundreds of the Europeans, upon whom he had placed such reliance. The rest of the army had retired within the walls, and, faithful to their cause, had determined to defend them to the last.

There was an awful din without ; the roar of cannon, the incessant rattle of musketry, the hissing sound of shells as they descended and burst, came full on the ears of the guilty pair, and the old woman cowered to the ground in fright.

"Does Hoormut-bee know of this ? Why is she not here ?" She asked after a long silence.

"She knows it, mother," said Kummoo, "but she is a coward, a pitiful coward, and dared not venture forth when shot is flying. But it is late—come—why do you delay ? you said all was ready."

"But the cannon, daughter—the noise—my hear is afraid."

"Ay, who is the coward now ? once you called *me* a coward, Kureena ; behold I am now ready. What are the cannon to us ? arise and come, I say, I see you have prepared the figure—come, time passes, and the Khan expects me ; he will have returned before this from the Durbar."

She will die without it, daughter. My spirits came to me in my dreams last night," said the hag,

"and they told me she would die ; this new ceremony is useless."

"I will not believe it. You lie, nurse ; she was better, and I—I hate her. Come, here is gold for you—you love it—come !" And she unfastened a gold ring from her wrist, and forced it upon the other's, while she seized her arm and dragged her along.

"My blessings on you, Khanum—the blessings of the old woman who is nigh death !" she said ; "this will feed a hundred Fakirs, this will purchase a hundred readings of the Koran for me when I am dead, my blessings on you daughter !"

"Come quickly !" cried Kummoo, "come quickly ! Why do you tarry ? The materials have been ready these many days. Enter now—I follow you."

She went into the inner room, and closed the door.

The room was the one we have before mentioned. A magic figure, of a different form to the first, was drawn on the clay floor—a square divided into compartments with figures in each, or marks intended to represent them. The old hag as she entered made three low bows to each side of the figure, and, placing herself at the head, began a low monotonous chant, which was intended to be a chapter of the Koran read backwards, rocking the while to and fro. After awhile she untied some earth and ashes from the corner of her scarf and pouring water upon them, gradually kneaded the mixture into a stiff clay. Soon she changed the incantation into the names of the many demons she had invoked before, and her tones became wilder and wilder as she formed the clay into the rude image of a human being. This done, she rested awhile, mumbling to herself with her eyes shut ; and at length, taking from her cloth a number of small pegs of wood, she drove them into the head, the arms, the body, the legs and feet of the image, accompanying each with curses at which even Kummoo shuddered.

"Have you the shroud, daughter ?" she said as she finished, "behold the image is ready, a fine

image it is—the ashes of a dead man, burned at the full moon, kneaded together Have you the shroud ? ”

“ Here it is, mother.”

“ Ay, that will do ; ’tis like a pretty corpse now. Take it away with you, fair one, to your home. Mark ! in three days there will be a young corpse in your house Ha ! ha ! away ! delay not—place it at her door, its head to the east that she may see it in the morning ere the sun rises—away ! ”

Kummoo’s brain was in a whirl, and she obeyed almost without speaking in reply. She hurried home through the thronged streets, little heeding any one—not even the shot which whistled above—and she reached her house undiscovered. Ameena, though still very weak, seemed to be gradually recovering from her long illness,—so much so that Kummoo, in fear of her recovery, had determined to put an end to her altogether. Meeran, her old nurse, who before feared she was going to die, noticed her improvement in health with heartfelt joy. And when the morning after Kummoo’s visit to the old witch, Ameena awoke refreshed from a good night’s rest, Meeran kissed her forehead, and cried,

“ May God keep and bless you this day, my rose of beauty ! There is no sadness in your face now, and how sweetly you smiled in your sleep.”

“ I had such happy dreams when you woke me, dear nurse,” said Ameena

“ That is good, you will soon be well and strong again now.”

As Meeran left her young mistress’s room her eye caught the fatally intended image, which had been laid there. For a moment she was staggered, and her heart failed her, as she remembered its fearful meaning ; but instantly she rallied “ I bless Thee, O gracious Allah ! that she hath not seen this,” she said, “ to me it will do no hurt, nor to her, for I will remove it.” But at first she hesitated to touch so foul a thing as that which in its corpse-clothes lay

before her. "In the name of the Most Clement and Merciful!" she cried, in very desperation, as seizing the figure at last, and hiding it under her scarf, she hurried forth into the open air. "It would be well to lay it at her own door," she thought, as she passed near that of Kummoo-bee; "but no, better to destroy it."

She passed out into the street. The fresh grey dawn was breaking, and only an occasional firing disturbed the silence. She looked for a dunghill; there was one not far off, occupied by a dozen dogs snailing at each other, and quarrelling for soft places among the ashes. With a volley of abuse and a few stones Meeran drove them away, and proceeded to do her errand. "May all the curses which were said over this image," she cried aloud, "descend upon the authors of it! may they dwell in their bones, their livers, their blood, and their flesh, Amin! Amin! Amin!" She then spat on the face of the image, and throwing it on the ground with volleys of abuse, she trampled it to atoms under her feet, and pounded them with a stone till not a fragment remained entire, then taking up the dust, she threw it to the four quarters of the heavens; and then, and then only, felt satisfied that the spell was broken.

2.—*Kasim to the Rescue.*

The spell was broken—for the time. But Meeran realised that something must be done, and done quickly, to save Ameena's life. Another shock of this kind would kill her. The old nurse realised, with dread, that Ameena's enemies would soon make another attack, when they found this had failed. It was useless to appeal to the Khan. He seemed to be now entirely under Kummoo's influence, and to have lost all interest in Ameena.

In her desperation, Meeran's thoughts turned to Kasim Ali, and she determined, as her last resource, to make an appeal to his generosity, and implore him to rescue her young mistress and assist her to escape to her home in Hyderabad.

She knew she could do nothing without Ameena's consent, and so she put the matter before her. At first Ameena would not hear of it. But, without telling her of the dreadful figure she had found at her door, Meeran made her see her danger from Kummoo's hostility and the Khan's indifference ; and she at last, reluctantly, consented to her plan. The poor girl was in desperation, and longed either to get away to her home, or die.

Late that same evening Meeran and her brother Zulfikar, the cook, went to Kasim Ali's lodging. He was in his room, and hearing them on the verandah, and, thinking they were his servants, he called them in.

"It is I, *Hazir*," said Zulfikar, "and I have brought my sister—she would speak with you."

"What has happened?" cried Kasim: "your mistress is not worse?"

"No, my lord ; she is, praise be to God ! better," answered Meeran, "I think her more cheerful than she hath been for many days. She arose to the evening prayer and walked about the court-yard ; the wind was cool, and refreshed her. But ah ! Patel, she is not what she was ;" and Meeran burst into tears. "And now she is in danger of her life," she continued ; and told him of what she had found at the door of her room that morning.

Kasim was horrified and alarmed. "Would to God I could help her !" he cried, "I would, even at the risk of my life, if I knew how."

"I knew it ! I knew it !" cried the nurse, "I knew it ! you can aid her, Patel Sahib. You can save her, O Jemadar, and you will ! you will !" And she cast herself at his feet and sobbed aloud.

"Rise, Meeran, this is unseemly," said Kasim gently ; "again I swear to you, if I can aid her, even by peril of my life, I will do it."

"Listen then, Mir Sahib," she continued, rising and wiping her eyes ; "I have gained her consent—I have spoken to her already—I have told her you

are willing, that you will aid her in flight and assist her beyond the city, whence she can escape to her mother's. Will you not aid her? By the head of your mother, by your hopes of paradise, I beg you to do it, O Patel!"

"But the Khan," said Kasim, "will he not let her go?—the enemy is in the path, but were it Satan I would face him for her."

"The Khan?" cried the nurse,—“Bah! I spit on him for a man; his days are wasted in amusing himself with her who, as sure as God rules above us, is the author of this calamity. Speak to him? No,—she has asked him a thousand times, and I have too.” ‘The enemy is out,’ said he, ‘the English, who would make a captive of her, it would be madness. Bah! they do not war against women as he does. No! there is no hope from him!’”

“But will he not relent towards her?”

“God is my witness, no! For a week he has not seen her, and the poor soul is cut to the heart by his neglect. She is an angel, Mir Sahib, or she could not bear this indignity.”

Kasim sighed. He was in a difficult position. The Khan had been a good friend to him, and his sense of honour, his gratitude and his affection for the Khan made it impossible for him willingly to do him a wrong. Yet he could not stand by and see the woman he had already twice rescued from death slowly killed by the malice of her enemy. He knew how he would be misunderstood, if he interfered, but he decided he must risk not only his life, but his reputation, and rescue Ameena a third time.

“Is she strong enough for the journey?” he said at last, after a long silence.

“Ay, enough for that; her body is weak but her spirit is stout. If once she was bent on escape, it would turn her mind from the thought of the curse, and she would recover as soon as she had escaped from these accursed walls.”

"Alas!" sighed Kasim, "how dare I leave my post at such a moment, when the English are upon us, and every man must be true to his salt!"

"Stay!" he cried, a sudden thought seeming to strike him, "her father lives, does he not?"

"Why, yes, Mir Sahib, who does not know Rustum Ali Beg at Hyderabad—the bravest amongst its warriors?"

"Then he will be among the advancing army, surely," cried the young man; "and what matter if he is not? They will receive his daughter, and I will conduct her to them."

"To whom Mir Sahib, to whom?" she asked eagerly.

"To the troops of Nizam Ali Khan, who attend the English,—they will be before the city to-morrow."

"Thank God!" cried the woman, lifting up her hands and eyes in ecstasy, "Thank God! Oh, how I bless you Mir Sahib, for the news That will lend her courage, that will make her beauteous eye flash again and her cheek glow. Even should her father not be there, there will be a hundred others to whom the daughter of Rustum Ali Beg will be as a daughter"

"I will prepare all," he said, after a while, "a *dooly* and bearers shall be ready here, she must go at night Dare she come here? will you conduct her hither?"

"On my head and eyes be it!" said Meeran; "on my head and eyes!"

"Then remember, when I send to you come quickly, all will be prepared, and I will myself give her over to the leader of the Nizam's troops. Go now, you have tarried long."

Before they arose to depart, a female figure, which had been seated at the door, drinking in every word of their discourse with greedy ears, arose rapidly, and gliding away to the edge of the verandah, stepped from it into the court-yard, and squatted behind a thick bush which grew there. The joyful

pair passed on, and, after allowing a few moments to elapse, she arose and followed them. That woman was Sozun.

3.—*Jaffar's Revenge.*

Kasim arranged for the flight on the third day after Meeran's visit. The night before, Ameena slept peacefully. What if the cannon thundered without? She heard them not; a day more—nay, the next night, she was not to hear them, she hoped, for ever!

But the next morning Sozun went to Jaffar Sahib, and told him all she had heard.

"Are you sure, Sozun?" he said—"this is no lie of yours?—you do not dream?"

"As I told you, Jaffar, I heard it with my own ears. As I passed along they entered his house. I had before suspected, and followed them, for I knew the place, and that he would be at home, and then he said as I have told you."

"And they have arranged for to-night?"

"Ay! at eight she will be there."

"Oh rare! rare!" cried Jaffar, "the virtuous Kasim! the virtuous Syud! Oh rare! rare!" and he laughed heartily, and with a triumphant sound. "What fortune!" he continued, "both at once! both! who have robbed me of money, of credit, of rank. I shall be even with them. At eight, Sozun?"

"At eight. I heard it from Meeran, whom I have dogged these two days. I heard her say it to her brother."

"Good! I will prevent it. Now go, fair one, for to me you are ever fair Sozun, and beloved." And thus saying, he took up his sword and passed forth on his errand.

The Khan was at his post, in a tower near the wall. Jaffar ascended it: the men were working two heavy guns, and some French officers directed them from time to time. As he mounted the steps a shot was fired.

"*Shabash* !" cried the Khan, "well aimed ! It hit a man yonder—I saw him go down. Ha, Jaffar Sahib, welcome, come and see the sport ; stand here ; so now, they are preparing another."

"I would speak to you privately, Khan, descend a few steps there, we shall be unheard."

"Ha ! a message from the Sultan ? Well, I attend you," and he descended. "Now speak ; what is it ?"

Jaffar regarded him for an instant, and chuckled ; it was the laugh of the devil within him. "Pardon the question," he said, "I would ask after your house ; your wife is sick, I have heard ?"

"Ay, truly ; but by my beard I understand you not, Jaffar ; do you mock me ?"

"No ! Has she been really ill ? At the point of death ?"

He laughed again—but slightly. "They say Kasi Ali Patel saved her life once, Khan Sahib ?"

"Why do you ask ? away with your ribald jokes, Jaffar—I like it not. You know I will not brook insult, least of all from you."

"Pah !" said the other, "I mean no insult ; I mean well to you."

"Well ?"

"Ay, well ! Are you sure your wife was ill ? was there no pretence ? no deception of you, to gain her own ends ?"

"Pretence ! deception !"

"Ay—why do you repeat my words ? Did Kasim Ali ever perform ceremonies for her—for her, your wife, Ameena ?"

"Kasim Ali—for Ameena ? Dog ! how dare you name *her* before me ?"

"Dog in your teeth !" cried the other fiercely ; "I tell you, old man, I am your friend, else I would have blood for that word. Khan Sahib, listen. you are old—you have untarnished fame—en love you—I, whom you have sneered at and reviled, love you—I would not see you wronged."

"Wronged ?"

"Ay, wronged ! cannot such things be?—Old man, I say, look to your house to-night, for one will leave it to return no more."

The Khan gasped for breath, and tottered to the wall, which prevented his falling ; he rallied after an instant, and with his sword uplifted rushed upon Jaffar.

"Strike!" said the latter, as he drew himself up proudly, "if you can strike one who speaks only for your good!"

"For my good" groaned the Khan, dropping the point of his sword, "messenger of evil! Say that you have lied, and I will forgive you—I will bless you!"

"I cannot, I swear it is too true."

"True! give me patience, what of Kasim Ali ?—of my son?"

"Ay, and Ameena ; you have been a dupe, Khan Sahib, as many another. Ha! ha!"

"Do not laugh," said the miserable Khan, "do not laugh—it is mockery to laugh ; how did you hear this? tell me—I am calm, I can listen."

"No matter how, will you abide the proof? I will accompany you at the hour."

"Whither?"

"To the Patel's house, dare you come?"

"Now! now!" shouted the Khan in frenzy, "let me have immediate proof."

"No! no! there has been no harm done yet—there may not be any meant. Will you come with me at night?"

"I will."

"Till then be calm I may be wrong—I pray God I may be, for I honour the Patel, if we are wrong, we will say it is a visit ; do you agree?"

The Khan was stupefied. "What did you say?" he asked, "I did not hear you."

Jaffar repeated his question.

"I will come ; you will find me here, Jaffar—here, at my post, like a soldier ; if indeed by that time I

am—but no matter—if I am alive I will accompany you.”

“Farewell then, God keep you ! ”

The Khan remained leaning against the wall; the shot was whistling around him, but he heard it not; there was no sound in his ears but one, the low but distinct “Ay, and Ameena !” which Jaffar had uttered. He would have given worlds could they have been recalled.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW ABDUL RAHMAN KHAN FOUGHT HIS LAST FIGHT.

1.—Kasim rescues Aameena a Third Time.

As the time for their flight that evening drew near Aameena's courage almost failed her. Several times she tried to start, but sank down again

"I cannot do it, nurse," she said "I have no strength to walk, my knees tremble, my heart fails, there is no hope" And she burst into tears.

"Come, this is folly, my child," said Meeran "Where is your courage? Remember the curse! Come away from this unhappy place, and be free"

At last she became calmer, and allowed Meeran to lead her away. As they left the house, they found Zulfikar, armed with a sword and shield, waiting outside to escort them.

"Keep close behind us!" said Meeran, "close—we will lead. When we have entered the Patel's door, go round to the other, where the ponies are. All is prepared—is it not?"

"They are there even now," said Zulfikar, "and the Patel waits. Walk fast—I pray for you as I go."

They hurried on. The open fresh cool air had revived Aameena, and though she still trembled exceedingly, and her heart was in a tumult of conflicting feelings, she suffered herself to be led, rather than walked, at as rapid a pace as Meeran thought possible for one so weak. Aameena knew the house was near, but moments seemed like hours as they proceeded. There were many people in the streets, hurrying about confusedly, and many forms of shrouded women, like her own, some alone, others in company, walking very fast—soldiers, horsemen and

artillery, proceeding to their destinations on and near the walls. Cries, oaths, the rattle and creaking of the artillery-wheels, and, above all, the roar of the cannon, resounded in Ameena's ears, and the din and confusion almost stunned her, but Meeran cheered her on, and she felt stronger as she proceeded.

Two persons were watching for her whom she little thought of, they were her husband and Jaffar. They were standing at the corner of a street nearly opposite Kasim's abode, they were in the deep shadow of a high wall, and could not well be seen. The poor Khan panted and gasped for breath, his soul was on fire; revenge burned there, and suspicion was strong.

"Look! look! Khan," said Jaffar in a hoarse whisper; "see two figures! and now a man! see! he's fat—'tis her brother! And one leads the other on. She hesitates, the other drags her in—no—she stops—the cook passes on—shall I cut him down?"

"Ameena!" gasped the Khan in a low husky voice, stretching his arms out to her, "Ameena—enter not!—away, home!"

He had only spoken in a hoarse whisper, but he thought he had shouted those broken sentences.

"Are you satisfied, Khan? am I your friend now?" said Jaffar in a tone of triumph. "Will you see more?—follow, the door is open, softly, you shall see all; you know the place, they will be in the inner room. Come, come! you may yet prevent it."

"Prevent what?" said the Khan abstractedly. He was bewildered, he could hardly speak, his mouth was so parched.

"Come and see! come! we may be late." And Jaffar seized his arm and dragged him across the road. The door was ajar; they entered.

The Khan panted hard and quick—so quick that his breath hardly came at times—it was marvellous they heard him not. His hand grasped his sword; he looked through a chink in the door with eyes that glared like a tiger's and were staring from their sockets.

Within, in the inner room he saw Ameena, closely veiled, seated on a couch, with her nurse, Meeran, standing beside her, and Kasim Ali who had evidently just welcomed them.

"We must not delay," Kasim Ali was saying.

"She is still very weak," replied Meeran, and then, turning to the veiled figure, she added—"Arise, Beebee! the *dooly* is ready. Come, we lose time, you will follow, Patel Sahib?"

"I will," said Kasim. "Arise, lady, and let me take you away into safety." And he took her gently by the hand, and raised her up.

"Do you see? Do you hear, Khan Sahib?" whispered Jaffar. "Do you believe now? Ha! was I true? Look, he takes her hand, she is going with him!"

The demon had done his work. In a frenzy, like a addened beast, the Khan dashed through the door, which opened inwards. His sword was naked, and flashed as it was high up-raised in his nervous and passionate grasp. A wild shriek burst from Meeran, and she fled.

"Devils!" he shouted in a voice of fury, "Devils! Dog of a Patel! Rahman Khan has seen you!"

The sword was quivering above his head, and it descended blindly, to slay, he thought, both at a blow. Kasim Ali stretched forth his arm to stay it, he was too late: the blood of Ameena, who was senseless, gushed forth over him, and her head fell back upon his bosom. Kasim tried to get at his sword, while he held the lifeless form on his arm; he tore it desperately down from the nail on which it hung above him, expecting another blow momentarily; it came not. His sword was tied to the scabbard, and the knot of the cord would not open. All was the work of an instant; he turned, ready to ward off another blow, and beheld a sight in which horror and pity struggled with revenge for mastery.

The Khan's sword was on the ground, his hands were clasped, his eyes staring and fixed upon

Ameena, the sight of her blood had calmed his fury.

"Miserable man, what have you done?" said Kasim hurriedly.

The Khan could not reply. He rolled his blood-shot eyes upon Kasim, and waving his hand turned and fled.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed a voice which Kasim knew to be Jaffar's. He laid Ameena down, and looked at her with dim eyes—she seemed dead.

"I will revenge you," he cried, and darted after them.

He saw them pass the small door, and close it violently. But when he had opened it, and dashed on into the open street, he saw them not, but taking the way opposite to theirs, he fled down it at his utmost speed.

A moment after him a woman with breathless haste entered by the same door. "O Allah!" she exclaimed, "Thou who didst soften my heart, grant I may not be too late. Something has happened Jaffar and the Khan fled past me.

She hurried through the courts, traversed the little verandah, and darted into the room. Her sight for an instant failed her; there was a pool of blood on the white *masnad*, and the lady lay there—her white sheet and long hair dabbled in it. For an instant her heart was sick, but she rallied herself. "If there is only life! Meeran, Meeran, where are you? *If* there be only life, I vow to be her slave for ever! Lady, dear lady, do you hear? Meeran, Meeran, where are you?"

"Who calls?" said Meeran, advancing, terror-stricken, from the other door in the court before the

"It is I, Sozun: haste hither! We may yet save her. Quick! is your heart so cowardly?"

"How came you here, Sozun?" said Meeran, suspiciously.

"No matter, I will tell you—so raise her up."

"O what a gash!" exclaimed both, turning their heads away from the horrid sight for an instant

"But she is warm," said Meeran. "There may be life. Hold her, while I run for my brother—he is without."

He came quickly. For a long time they doubted if she would revive, and her first breath was hailed with a burst of joy.

"I know a secure place," said Sozun; "she is not safe here. She will be discovered by the Khan, and he will kill her."

"Are you to be trusted, Sozun?" said Meeran; "it was you who caused this murder, and I mistrust you."

"God who sees my heart knows how true it is," said the woman, "and how bitter is my repentance. You may leave this poor flower if you will, but never while Sozun has life will she depart from her, come weal, come woe." And as she said it she looked up fervently. And when Meeran saw that her eyes glistened with tears which fell over on her cheeks—that her features were quivering, and her lips moved in silent prayer, then she believed her, and yielded to the necessity of the moment.

Zulfikar, with their assistance, bound up the wound, which had cut deeply into the shoulder and neck, and had bled much, and they now laid the lady in the dooly. Only that she sighed now and then, she would have been thought to be dead but there was life, and while there was life there was hope. The bearers, who had been ready without from the first, were now called, and preceded by Sozun, they went on till they stopped at an obscure house behind the principal bazaar, in an unfrequented part of the Fort. The lady still lived, when they lifted her out of the dooly and laid her upon as soft and easy a bed as the house afforded.

2.—*The Khan's Last Fight.*

Kasim Ali passed a wild and restless night, and sick at heart, as the morning broke over the beleaguered city, he entered the court of the mosque, from the

tall minarets of which the Muazzin was proclaiming the morning prayer. "It will calm me," he said, "to join in it."

The Sultan arrived soon after from his early circuit of the walls, attended by his chief officers, and the morning prayer commenced.

It was finished, and men arose and were preparing to depart. "Stay!" cried the Sultan, "we would speak to all," and he cast his eye around. "You all here love me," he said, in so melancholy a tone that most were touched by it. "Alas! there are but few remaining like you. How many have been faithless, who have eaten my salt for years! Listen—our glory is gone—the light of the earth, the star of Islam is quenched. No more triumphs to the faith—all is dark before us. Hear what we have come to; we asked for peace at the hands of the infidels—we asked the cause of this unjustifiable attack—why we were insulted and bearded in our very capital; but no answer is returned. The thirst of power and conquest is apparent in the reply of Cornwallis. Listen."

There was perfect silence every man felt that the Sultan's spirit was broken, and melancholy was upon every face, as he unfolded a letter, and, mounting a step of the pulpit, began to read. It was short, and there were few ceremonious expressions: to resign half his territories, to pay the cost of the war, and to surrender his sons as hostages, were the humiliating terms proposed, and as they heard it, a burst of indignation arose from the assembly, which rang through the lofty arches and roof of the mosque.

"Blessed be God! your old fire is still within you," cried Tippu, "and were I but rid of Cornwallis, that host yonder would disperse like smoke before the sun: we might pursue them to annihilation. Will no one rid me of him? Will no one lead a sortie from the Fort, and dashing at his tent, ere he be suspected, bear him or his head hither? I vow a reward, such as it hath not entered into any one's thoughts to conceive, to him who does this: and those who fall, you well

know are martyrs, and when they taste of death are translated into paradise."

Unknown to each other, and from opposite sides, two men dashed forward eagerly to claim that service of danger. The one was Kasim Ali, the other a man from whose blood-shot eyes and haggard features—upon which anguish and despair were fearfully written—all shrank back as he passed them—it was Rahman Khan.

"Kasim! Kasim Ali! you are not fit for this service; you are weak—your cheek is pale. Go, youth!" cried the Sultan, "there are a hundred others ready"

"Not so, Light of Islam!" replied the young man. "I was the first—it is my destiny—I claim the service. If it be written that I am to fall this day, the shot would reach me even in your palace. I am not weak, but strong as ever I was; behold my arm." And he bared it to the elbow; the muscles stood out as he clenched his hand. "Behold I am strong—I am full of power, therefore let it be so. Your slave will be fortunate, there is no fear"

"It is *my* right," cried Rahman Khan. The hollow tone of his voice as it fell on the Sultan's ear caused even him to start. "I was before him, bid me go instead; he is young and should be spared, the old soldier is ripe for death."

"What ails you?" said the Sultan to him. "Why do you stare so, and roll your eyes, Rahman Khan; are you ill?"

"I am well," he answered, "quite well. Ha! ha! quite well; but as I am your slave, and have eaten your salt for years, could I hear your words unmoved? No! therefore let me go, it is *my* right for I am his elder."

"Go, both of you," continued Tippu, "you have been friends, nay more, father and son, take whom you will with you. Go—may God shield you both from danger!"

Both saluted him profoundly, and then, turning, their eyes met. "Come!" said the Khan. "we

delay." There was a burst of admiration from the assembly—a shout which rose and spread abroad to those without. "Who will follow Rahman Khan?" he cried aloud. "Come, my friends, follow Rahman Khan for the faith and for Islam. Open the gate."

"For the faith! for Islam!" cried the devoted band. The heavy door opened, and emerging from the shadow of the gate and wall, the sunlight glanced upon their naked weapons, gay apparel, and excited horses, as they dashed in a fearful race toward the camp.

"Show us the tent of the great commander!" cried Kasim to a sentinel who stared at them as they passed, evidently taking them to be a body of the Nizam's horse.

"Yonder!" said the man, pointing to one at some distance.

"Follow Kasim Ali! Follow Rahman Khan!" were the cries of the leaders, both urging their horses to full speed in reckless rivalry. They had been observed, however: a staff-officer had watched them from the first, and suspected their intention. Now he could not be mistaken. He flew to a picquet of native soldiers, and drew them up across the very path of the rapidly-advancing horsemen. Kasim marked the action, as the muskets obeyed the word of command; he saw the bright sun glance on a line of levelled barrels, and heard the sharp rattle which followed. His horse stumbled; as it fell, he saw the Khan toss his arms wildly into the air and reel in his seat, and the next moment his affrighted charger was flying riderless through the camp! He saw no more, he felt stunned for an instant, and his dead horse lay on his leg—causing sharp pain. He extricated himself and tried to rise—his leg failed him, and he fell again to the ground—it was broken. Again he looked around, a number of men and horses lay confusedly together, some writhing in pain and crying out for mercy, while the rest of the band were flying confusedly to the Fort.

The sepoys who had fired ran up, headed by an English officer. Kasim had lost his sword, it lay at a little distance, and he could not recover it. One of the men, seeing that he lived, raised his bayonet as he approached to kill him. He shut his eyes, and repeated the Kalma.

"Hold!" cried a voice, "do not kill him—he is an officer; raise him up and disarm him."

"You are a prisoner," said the officer to Kasim: "do not resist—are you wounded?"

"My leg is broken," said Kasim; "kill me, I am not fit to live, I have no desire for life."

"Poor fellow!" said the officer, "he is in great pain. Lift him up, some of you, and take him to my tent. He is evidently an officer, by his dress."

"Yonder lies my leader!" said Kasim, pointing to the Khan, "raise me, and let me look upon him once more. We were friends in life until yesterday—in death we should not have been divided."

They were touched by his words, and obeyed him. The Khan lay on his face, quite dead. They turned the body: Kasim looked upon the familiar features—they were already sharp and livid. There was a small hole in the forehead, from which a few drops of black blood had oozed; his death had been instant as thought. Kasim heeded not the pain he suffered, he felt as though his heart were bursting; and throwing himself beside the body, wept passionately.

After a while he tried to rise, and they assisted him. "That was a gallant soldier!" he said to the officer, "let him be buried as one, by men of my faith."

"I will answer for it," said an Indian officer, stepping forward, "you shall hear this evening that the rites of your faith have been performed over him. If he was an enemy, yet he was a brother in the faith of Islam."

"Enough! I thank you, friend," replied Kasim. "Now lead on—I care not whether I live or die, in those I lived for are gone from the earth."

CHAPTER XX.

HOW KASIM ALI LEFT THE SULTAN'S SERVICE.

I.—Tippu's Generosity.

The officer's curiosity had been excited by his words and his appearance. He was removed gently to his tent, and bedding laid on the ground. A surgeon, a friend of the officer, was sent for. Kasim's leg was examined, the thigh was badly fractured above the knee, but the operation was skilfully performed, and in a manner which surprised Kasim. It was bound up, and he was soon in comparative ease. How little he had expected such kindness! And when he contrasted it with what would have been an Englishman's fate within the Fort, his heart was softened.

The officer was Philip Dalton. He had long thought on the possibility of saving some captive, that he might gain information of the English prisoners, and he tended Kasim kindly. In a few days they were better friends; the cold reserve of Kasim had worn off before the frank manner of the Englishman, and they now conversed freely of the war, of their adventures, and of the present chance of success. Kasim soon saw that all hope for the Sultan was at an end, from the vigour of the attack and the efficiency of the army, and he knew that within the fort existed dread and discontent. After a while Philip asked about the prisoners—whether he had known or spoken to any of them. And when Kasim related to him his interference on behalf of an English prisoner at Bangalore, and his attempt to protect him in the Sultan's Durbar, risking his life for him, Philip's cheek glowed, and his heart throbbed, in a silent conviction that it was Herbert himself. That conviction

became a certainty when Kasim added that he remembered that the prisoner's name was Compton, and that he had asked him to look out for a brother officer of his called Philip Dalton.

"Why," Dalton cried excitedly, "that is my name, I am Philip Dalton. Thank God I have at last news of my friend."

But his joy was somewhat damped when he found that Kasim could tell him nothing further. Indeed it was news to Kasim that Compton had not been killed at the rock. "Then he may still be alive," he said. "I remember," he added after a pause, "a conversation between the Sultan and Jaffar Sahib about an Englishman—it was before the siege; there was no one else present. Tippu spoke of one who was skilled in fortification, in the arts of war and of gunnery, far above the French adventurers in his service, who after all are but pretenders to science. Could this be your friend?"

"It is! it is!" cried Philip, catching at the idea in desperation, "It must be; he was very skilled in all. Your last words make me sure that it was he. By your soul, tell me if you know anything of him."

"Alas! no," said the young man. "Yet they concealed nothing. Jaffar said it was useless; that he had sent trusty messengers to him to the fort, through the jungles, at the peril of their lives, with offers of mercy, pardon, wealth, if he would take service in the army. He had spurned all, and then the Sultan grew furious, and swore he might die there."

"Did he mention the fort, the place where it was, in what direction?" asked Philip eagerly.

"No, and I know not, Sahib; it is not in this district. If he be still alive, he is in one of those lonely posts away to the west—in Coorg, or on the frontiers of Malabar, a little spot on the top of some lonely peak, perhaps. It is a horrible fate to think on, Sahib," he said, shuddering; "better that he should have died long ago. But, after all, it may not be your friend."

"Perhaps not," said Philip, sighing, "and yet I have hope, and when the Fort is stormed, and your proud Sultan brought to the reckoning he deserves, it will be hard if we gain not news of him we seek."

"May God grant it, Sahib! You have bound me to you by the kindness you have shown a stranger and an enemy, and I will rejoice, even as you do, that your friend should be saved. But, alas! I have little hope. Yet when I recover, and this war is over, if I live I will search for you and rescue him."

"God bless you!" cried Philip, "I believe you. You have now known that we are not the villains which our enemies would represent us to be."

✓ Not long after the war came to an end. The Sultan in despair yielded to the terms laid down by Lord Cornwallis, and the English army entered Seringapatam. All the captives who were known to be in the Fort and province were delivered up, and were welcomed with joy by the English troops.

With what anxiety did Philip Dalton and Charles Hayward fly from body to body of these men—grown aged and careworn from misery and long confinement. Alas! Herbert Compton was not among them, nor could any one tell of his fate, though his name was remembered vividly. And it was known among them from Bolton, who was dead, that he had not perished at the rock of Haidar.

Now, therefore, for the Sultan again and again swore that he had given up all, and that Herbert had died soon after his escape from the rock, Philip and young Hayward abandoned all hope. True, for a while they thought that one of the strongholds of Coorg might contain their poor friend, but there, too, they were disappointed. Hope, which had been for years buoyant, sank within them for ever.

Kasim Ali was unable to walk when the English arrived at my left Seringapatam, and Philip Dalton persuaded him to travel with him in order to complete his cure under the English surgeon. To this he agreed; and having accompanied Philip to Bangalore, he parted

from him there with regret, with a strong sense of his kind and generous behaviour, promising that should he ever discover any clue to the fate of poor Herbert, he would write, for the nations being now on good terms, the communications were open, and he could do so with safety.

For a long while, however, he was unfit to move. He made a report of his escape to the Sultan, and receiving in return an honorary dress for his gallant behaviour, he was assured that his rank remained to him—nay, was increased. He begged leave of absence and returned to his village to regain, in its quiet seclusion, the strength and peace of mind he had lost. Of Ameena he never thought but as one dead; for though he had written to a friend to endeavour to trace her fate, and to discover where she had been buried, yet she could not be traced, nor her attendants. They were supposed to have escaped to the Nizam's army in the confusion which followed after the siege, and her body to have been buried in some obscure place during the night on which she had been cut down. His friend wrote word that the matter was not known, except perhaps to a few of the Khan's servants, who had not revealed it.

Kasim found, too, that he had been declared heir to most of the Khan's wealth, which was large. There was a handsome provision made for his two wives. In his will a large sum was left to Ameena; but as she did not appear, it was kept in trust for her should it ever be claimed.

Kasim thus became a rich man, and he spared no pains to make his mother's declining years as happy as was possible. A new and handsome house was built for her; his village walls were rebuilt, and strengthened against troublous times to come. A new mosque was built; and a neat *serai* marked the spot where he had rescued Ameena. This was his favourite resort, where of an evening, spreading a carpet beneath the trees, he would remain in conversation with those he loved and respected, the elders

of his village, both Hindu and Mohammadan, or else in silent and sad thought on the past. His health continued very poor, and from time to time his leave of absence was renewed. At length he could delay no longer, and he once more resumed his attendance at the court of the Sultan.

It was not, however, with the same feelings of indifference that he now regarded the monstrous acts of the Sultan. His mind had been made more tolerant by his residence in the English camp, where besides Philip Dalton, there were many others who, either out of curiosity or to while away a tedious hour, would come to his bedside to talk with him. Among these Englishmen whom he had, in his ignorance, formerly hated, he found many whom he could respect and even love. He could not help contrasting them with the Sultan and some of his favourites. Jaffar Sahib, especially, was an offence in his sight. He seemed to be high in Tippu's favour, and his connection with Ameena's death made him more hateful than ever to Kasim. Kasim, too, was a good Mussulman, and the new customs which Tippu was always introducing, his pretensions to supernatural power, his devotion to unholy and magical rites, and, above all, his acts of cruelty and tyranny, disgusted Kasim and made him feel more and more out of place at the Mysore Court. Moreover the district in which his village lay had been transferred by the Treaty of Seringapatam to the Nizam's dominions, and he found it difficult to serve two masters. He therefore made up his mind to leave Tippu Sultan's service.

At last at an evening Durbar he arose, stepped forward, and bowing said :—

"Your slave would make a petition, if he is permitted?"

"Surely," said the Sultan; "what did Kasim Ali ever say that was not welcome?"

"My lord," he began, "it is hard for one who has received benefits at your hands, to deny himself the

pleasure of seeing day by day the Light of Islam—the Lion of the Faith. O Sultan ! be merciful to your servant, and forgive the request he makes, that he may retire from your service into the obscurity and quiet he has long coveted. Another far more fitted than I am will succeed me, and I shall be content in the administration of my property, which, distant as it is, requires my constant attention and care.”

Tippu stared at him, and Kasim felt uncomfortable. He could not remember that any one had ever made such a request before, and he could not foresee the result. Yet the Sultan had been in good humour all the day, and he hoped for the best.

“What do I hear, Kasim Ali—that you would leave my service ?”

“Even so, *Hazrât* !”

“You are joking, Kasim Ali,” said Tippu ; “and yet you have a serious face. By your soul, say this is not meant !”

“It is in very truth, O Prince ! I have long thought of it. I waited only till my lord’s mind was happy and free from care to announce it, for I would not have my memory linked with painful recollections, but with pleasant thoughts.”

The Sultan’s brow darkened. “You are considerate, young man !” he said bitterly. “When I was happy and merry in my heart, you must needs mar all by this news. But no matter ; you have served us well and faithfully—we shall long remember it, nor would we detain any one against his will. We have hundreds in our valiant army to fill vacant places. Therefore go—you have my leave. Yet you shall not have to say I was churlish in this, you are dismissed with honour. Bring hither two shawls, a turban, and an ornament for the head—also a noble horse from my stables, and a sword and shield from the private armoury,” he cried to an attendant. “You shall see, sirs, how Tippu estimates greatness, and how he rewards it.”

Kasim was much moved. He had expected a stormy scene, and absolute refusal, he had prepared himself for it, and for flight if necessary. Now he could have cried like a child; all the Sultan's caprice, cruelty, and impiety were forgotten. There sate before him the benefactor and the steady friend of years. He continued gazing on him, and often he felt the tears rush to his eyes. The attendant entered with a tray; upon it were a pair of magnificent shawls of Kashmir, a superb turban and a jewel of great value for the forehead. The Sultan examined them with the air of a merchant. "They are a handsome pair, and worthy of him," he said, "and this too is rich, and the diamonds of good water. Approach, Kasim Ali!"

He obeyed. The Sultan arose, cast over his shoulders the rich shawls, took the turban and jewel from the tray, and presented him with them. "Embrace me," he said,— "I love you: I shall ever remember you gratefully, Kasim Ali; and you will not forget the poor servant of Allah, Tippu Sultan. Should his enemies revile him, there will be one whose tongue will speak his praise. Should you ever feel disposed to return, your place is open to you, or if as a guest, you are ever welcome. Go, may God keep you!"

"Never will I forget you, O benefactor!" cried Kasim, completely overcome, "never will I allow a word to be said against you, and in my home—in the wide world—wherever I go, men shall know of the generosity of the Lion of Mysore. I go—my prayers are for you and your prosperity night and day."

Kasim made low obeisances as he passed out of the audience-hall. He cast a last look round the well-known place; what scenes he had witnessed there, of joy and isery, frantic enthusiasm and fierce bigotry, torture, and even death! Enough! they were gone for ever, and he was glad that the feverish existence was at an end; henceforth before him was the peaceful and quiet life he had so long coveted.

The horse stood at the palace-gate, and men bearing the sword and shield. Kasim bounded into the saddle, and before the admiring spectators, many of them his kind friends, caused him to leap and bound to show how perfectly the animal was trained ; and then saluting them he rode on. Next morning he was on his way beyond the Fort.

2.—*Tippu's Treachery.*

That night Jaffar was alone with the Sultan ; they had conversed long on various matters. At last Jaffar exclaimed, " May I be your sacrifice ! it was wrong to let Kasim Ali go. "

" Why ? " said Tippu.

" He knows too much, " was the reply.

" But he is faithful, Jaffar ? "

The fellow laughed. " He is a good friend to the English. "

" To the English ? "

" Ay ! remember how often he has spoken in their favour, how often he has opposed others who reviled them. May I be your sacrifice ! he is unfaithful, or why should he leave you ? "

The Sultan was struck by the remark. " If I thought so, " he said quickly.

" Why should he for months have been collecting his money ? " continued Jaffar ; " every rupee he could collect has gone to Hyderabad, all except what he has with him. He has ground the uttermost pice from those who owed him anything. "

" Is this true ? "

" Ay, by our head ! Shall I bring the money-lenders who gave them. "

" Ha ! " cried the Sultan, " what a serpent have I been nourishing ! You said, to Hyderabad ? "

" Ay, he will go to the Nizam, and fill his ears with tales of you for the English, and give them a plan of this Fort. Was he not always with the engineers ? "

"Enough, good fellow," said the Sultan sternly, "he must not reach the city—do you understand?"

"I will not lose a moment, the men will have to travel fast, but they can overtake him."

"Will they dare attack him? there are few who would attempt that, even among your devils."

"There are some of them who would attack hell itself and its king Satan," said the man with a grin, "when they have had bhang enough; trust me, it shall be done. He escaped me once," said Jaffar, as he went out, "he will be lucky if he does so again. We shall be even at last."

* * * * *

Kasim Ali rode on gaily. With him were a number of men who had previously obtained leave of absence, and had stayed for the advantage of his society and safe conduct, for he was respected by all. They were proceeding, some on horseback, others on ponies, to various parts of the north of Mysore, some to his own district, some to Hyderabad. The road was light under their horses' feet, mile after mile passed almost without their knowledge, as they conversed freely and merrily together. At the point where the river Madar crosses the road to Bangalore there is a good deal of thick jungle, but they heeded not the pass, though it was noted for robbers; they were too strong a party to be attacked. As they proceeded carelessly, a shot whistled from among some bushes to the left—it went harmless; another, and Kasim felt a sting in his left arm, and he saw a man fall.

"Upon them!" he cried, drawing his sword; "upon the villains!" and he dashed into the jungle, followed by the best mounted. Ten or twelve men were flying at their utmost speed—but they had a poor chance before those determined horsemen. Kasim cut at two as he passed them; they were not killed but badly wounded; three others were slain.

"I know that rascal's face," said one of his companions, as the prisoners were brought up; "it is one of Jaffar's devils."

"Ay, and this is another," said Kasim; "he was in the Durbar yesterday morning."

"Tell us why you have done this?" he said; "why did you attack me? what have I ever done to harm you?"

"Nothing," said one sullenly; "it was the Sultan's order."

"You lie!" cried Kasim, striking him.

"Do not beat me," he replied; "but behold, here is the order to give us horses to overtake you, should you have gone on. We knew not that you had tarried in the city last night. We arose and came on to the last village; they told us there you had not passed, and we waited for you. Behold! this is the Sultan's seal."

It was truly so—his private seal: Kasim well knew it; he shuddered as he looked on it. Why should there have been such black treachery?

"Go!" said he to the man, recollecting himself, "you are but the instrument of others; go—may God give you a better heart! Tell your master I recognise his work; and bid him say to the Sultan, or say it yourself—the love that was between us is broken for ever. Go!"

"Let us press on, my friends," said Kasim, "not by the road, but by bye-paths. Though I know not what vengeance I have provoked, you see I am not safe."

They did so, and it was well that they travelled fast, for the baffled tiger raved at the loss of his prey, and many men pursued Kasim and his companions; but in vain.

CHAPTER XXI.

HOW TIPPU SULTAN MET HIS DEATH.

1.—Tippu's Last War.

Nearly seven years had passed, and once more an English army was besieging Seringapatam.

The Sultan had not been humbled by the defeat he had suffered at the hands of Lord Cornwallis. On the contrary he burned for revenge, and only waited until he was strong enough to strike again.

In the meantime his rule had become more oppressive and tyrannical than ever, and his cruel orders were carried out pitilessly by Jaffar Sahib and many other brutal officers of the same type. He also irritated his subjects by constant changes. In all departments, of finance, of the army, of agriculture, of justice, there were perpetual alterations, sometimes good, but more often puerile and absurd. New and perplexing laws were constantly being made, and new interpretations of the Koran which he pretended to receive by inspiration from Heaven. He devoted himself also to magic and astrology, and drew from them magnificent prophecies of his future brilliant destiny.

His prospects never seemed so bright as at the beginning of the year 1798. It seemed as if one effort on his part would rouse all the native princes of India to make common cause against the English, and, with French help, drive them out of the country. But it was at this moment that Lord Mornington determined to destroy the French influence in India. A treaty was made with the Nizam, and an English force arrived at Hyderabad and surrounded the French Camp. The whole sub sided without a blow.

The effect of this news at Seringapatam may be imagined ; and when it was followed by the news of the glorious victory of Nelson at the mouth of the Nile, which destroyed all Napoleon's schemes for a French empire in the East, the Sultan's spirits fell. It was in vain that he wrote apparently sincere letters to the Governor-General, and at the same time sent camel-loads of treasure to Sindhia to urge him to move southwards. His embassies to the other native princes were equally vain ; and the Sultan found out too late that he must face the dreaded English alone.

In 1799 the English invasion began. An army from Bombay, under General Stuart, approached by way of Coorg ; and the main army marched from Madras under General Harris. The Sultan decided not to wait at his capital while these two armies joined forces, but to deal with them separately. He marched out with his army, therefore, and first met the Bombay force at Siddleshwar. But though he led the charge in person, and his troops fought well, he was defeated. Falling back towards his capital, he turned upon the Madras army, advancing from the east, at Malvalli. But again fortune was against him, and his army was driven back in confusion.

The Sultan, plunged into despair, had retired westward. The army had collected together again, but thousands were missing, killed, or had deserted from his standard. Still there was hope : his officers were yet faithful ; the forage of the north bank of the Kaveri was utterly destroyed ; and his irregular cavalry was out burning villages and setting fire to the grass of the wide plains. If the English should advance, they would be drawn on to defeat as before. There was still hope : his plans of defence were being matured : troops poured into the Fort from all sides, and provisions for a year. He had treasure, too, and there was no fear. What could the English, with their small amount of artillery, do against the hundreds of cannon in the Fort and the new fortifications ?

"Let them come on!" he would say; "with that fort before, and a bare country behind them, let us see how long they will stay!" And his words were echoed by his flatterers, but it was easy to see, for all that, how dread gnawed at his heart.

2.—*The Siege of Seringapatam*

On the evening of the fourth day after the fight at Malvalli, he was in his tent of audience. He was confident, for no news had been heard of the English army, and it had not advanced upon the road as he had expected. He hoped it had retreated, or was stationary for want of forage; and he was even asserting broadly that it had.

Suddenly a messenger entered with dismay upon his face. Tippu knew not what to think. All his officers were present, and every one trembled, though they knew not what to expect.

"Speak!" cried Tippu fiercely; "what have you to say?"

"May I be your sacrifice! May I be pardoned," stammered the man; "the English have crossed the river!"

"Crossed the river?" echoed all, "how? where?"

"Dog!" cried the Sultan, "if you lie, I will have you torn asunder. Where did they cross?"

"At Sosillay."

"At Sosillay! Who has been the traitor? Is any one missing?"

"May I be your sacrifice!" said one officer, "it must be Kasim Ali Patel. He was seen hewing down the true believers at Malvalli. He is now an officer in the Nizam's army; and he could guide them to the ford."

"Kasim Ali!" gasped the Sultan; "God help me! then all is lost." And he sank down on his cushions in stupor.

Long he remained so, only at times repeating "Kasim Ali" and "Sosillay!" He had long ago,

repented of his treacherous attempt on Kasim Ali's life, and knew that, misled by Jaffar Sahib, he had done him a great injustice. He felt now that the man whom he had wronged was to be the minister of judgment upon him.

Hardly any one spoke except in whispers. After some delay, *sherbet* was brought to him, and he seemed to revive. He sat up, passed his hand across his forehead, as though his brain was bewildered. Then he arose and looked around him; his face was wan and careworn: those few minutes appeared to have done the work of years. Many burst into tears.

"You weep," he said, "you weep; why should you weep for one abandoned by God? I have no hope now. Why stay you with a man who is doomed? Go! you have served me well—you have fought for me, bled for me. I have been harsh, often cruel. Will you pardon me? Will you pardon a poor slave of God? Go! I—I—have ever loved you and now—"

He was interrupted: an officer, with streaming eyes, rushed from a side of the tent, and throwing himself at the Sultan's feet, clasped his knees and sobbed passionately aloud.

Tippu could endure no more. He who had been by turns bitter in sarcasm, brutal in mirth, cruel, proud, exacting, unfeeling, tyrannical, overbearing among his subjects, was now humbled. He appeared to struggle for a moment, but, unable to quell the wild tumult within him, he burst into tears—the first he had ever been seen to shed.

Then followed a scene which words cannot paint—a scene of passionate raving, of tears, of oaths, of fidelity to death. Men embraced one another, and swore to die side by side. All swore before Allah and the Prophet, by the Sultan's head and the salt they ate, that they would die as martyrs. They determined to retreat upon the city, and to fight under its walls to death.

The army retired, and awaited the attack, but they were disappointed. The English army passed

three miles to the left, in glittering array, and encamped at the opposite side of the Fort to that on which the former attack had been made; and for the time the Sultan rejoiced in his safety.

Days passed: the thunder of cannon ceased not night or day, and the hearts of all were appalled. No mercy was expected from the British. Death would have been welcome at first; but its gradual approach, and the stern progress of the English to victory, could not be shut out from men's eyes. All the redoubts beyond the Fort had been carried long ago. Even the French, upon whom the eye of the Sultan rested in hope, were beaten back by the native troops of the enemy.

Then he felt how he had been deceived, and betrayed to destruction. Day by day the mosque resounded with his frantic prayers. He kept away from his family, for his presence in the zenana was ever a signal for an outburst of grief. He lived in his hall of audience, or in a small room off it, where most part of the day and night was passed in vain astrological calculations, or horrible magical rites. At other times he was upon the walls, directing cannon and firing with his own hand.

The breach in the wall became practicable. The guns on both sides of it had long been silenced, and men looked on at the work of destruction, and heard the storm of shot and shell, which poured through it, in sullen despair. The brave Mir Ghafur who was devoted to the Sultan, saw that it could not be defended much longer. When the day dawned he went to the monarch, to try to rouse him to a sense of his danger. It was vain. Tippu had resorted to magic and astrology, and had persuaded himself that some miracle would save him.

"There is nothing between you and your enemies O my Sultan!" said the Syud; "nothing to prevent the storm. Their men are ready in the trenches, and have been there since it was light. I have watched them. The walls are gone. If your slave

is permitted, he will commence a wall and a ditch across the inside that cannot be breached, and it will stop them."

"Go, Syud, we fear not," said the Sultan, "we have hope in other things; events will happen which you know not of. The English will be blasted this day—withered from the face of the earth. Go, old man! we feel for your zeal, but there is no fear."

"You will never see to-morrow," said the Syud prophetically, "unless what I advise is done. I will do it; I have sought death these many days, but it comes not—I may find it there"

"Go then, go!" cried the Sultan hastily; "trouble me no more. Do as you will, but trouble me not. Where is Jaffar Sahib?"

"Refuge of the world, I am here," said Jaffar advancing.

"Have you obeyed my orders?"

"Protector of the poor, I have: the prisoners died in the night. Not one lives now."

"Good: if the Fort is taken, the enemy will look in vain for their brethren. Have you sent for Captain Compton?"

"The men go to-morrow."

"Good: when he comes, he will be the last offering."

3.—Tippu's Last Fight.

It was noon the following day. The day was bright and hot, and the strong sunlight played upon the white tents of the English camp, the parched ground around them, and the black and rocky bed of the river. In the camp many men were moving about, and marching to and fro. The Sultan was looking at them with his telescope, but saw nothing to excite alarm. He was gayer than usual, for he had seen his face in a jar of oil, and the reflection had been fortunate.

"Rain will fall to-night in the hills," he said to a favourite near him, Rajah Khan, as he observed

some heavy masses of white fleecy clouds in the west, which hung over the nearer hills and shrouded the distant peak. "My magic has done good already."

As he spoke a man rushed up the steps of the tower. Tears were in his eyes, and his manner was wild.

"What has happened, O fool?" said the Sultan; "have you seen the devil?"

"*Hazrūt!*" said the soldier, speaking with difficulty, "the Syud, the holy Mir Ghafur, is dead."

"Merciful Allah!" cried Tippu, "are you sure of this?"

"Alas! quite sure, Light of the World! I carried him away—behold his blood."

"It was his destiny," said the Sultan gloomily; "it was once said his fate was linked with mine,—let it come. His death was that of a soldier; may mine be the same! Go! let him be buried with honour. We will dine here," he added to an attendant, "we feel hot within, and this air from the water is cool."

His light meal was soon finished, and again he sat looking towards the trenches. He thought there were many men in them. As if by mutual consent, the firing had ceased on both sides, and no sound arose except the busy hum of the city. In the English camp all was still as death. He wondered for a while idly at the unusual quietness, and looked again. On a sudden a man climbed upon the mound of the trench. He was tall and noble in appearance, his height was exaggerated by his position—he looked a giant. The Sultan's heart sank within him; he could not be mistaken in those features—it was General Baird whom he had kept as a prisoner for three years and whom he had so often reviled. "He comes to revenge the old man," he muttered—"to revenge Matthews!"

It was a noble sight to see that one man stand thus alone in front of both armies. He appeared to look at the Fort for an instant, then drew his sword

from its scabbard, and as it came forth it flashed in the sunlight. He waved it high in the air. Another leaped to his side—he was an Indian officer, and he wore a steel cap and glittering chain-armour; a shield hung on his arm, and he waved a broad sabre. They leaped together from the mound, followed by hundreds who with loud cheers dashed on in regular order.

“Ah!” cried the Sultān, “they come—Baird and sim Ali! Look to the breach! every man to the breach! defend it with your lives!”

He was hurrying away, when a thought appeared to strike him. “Stay!” he cried, “bring water, we have eaten, and are unclean, we would not die like an unbeliever, but one for whom the Apostle waits ere he enters Paradise.”

“To the breach! to the breach!” was now the cry far and wide; those who loved the Sultan hurried there to die, to stop with their bodies the rush of the English—a living wall in place of that which had been torn down.

It was a sight on which men looked with throbbing hearts and aching eyes from both sides—those in the English camp, and those in the Fort. There were but few cannon to stop the English, all upon the breach had been dismounted, and no one dared show himself upon the broken down defences to plant others. But as the British advanced, a storm of shot and rockets met them, which was enough to have turned more daring men. Many went down before it, many writhed and struggled.

“They are drunk!” cried the Sultan; “Be firm, brothers, and fear not though they are desperate. Remember, we are present,—a hundred rupees for every Feinghi! Look to your aim—they cannot pass the ditch.”

Such broken sentences escaped him from time to time, as he fired upon the enemy with his own hand, often with deadly aim. But though the resistance made was desperate, what was able to withstand the hot ardour of this assault? Man after man went

down before the strong arm of Baird, who toiled like a knight of old in the breach, cheering on his men with loud cries of revenge for the murdered. Kasim Ali fought beside him, and equalled the deeds of the British leader.

"They bear charmed lives!" cried the Sultan, dashing to the ground the gun he had just fired; "twice have I struck down the men close to them, but the balls harmed them not."

"Retire, I beseech you, O Prince!" cried Rājah Khan and a hundred others around him; "this is no place for you; on our lives be it we drive them back."

"No; I will die here," said Tippu doggedly; "they shall pass into the Fort over my body; but the ditch is yet before them—they cannot pass it unless it is filled."

This was passed in a moment: the struggle on the breach was over. The defenders and their enemies lay there in heaps. Still there was the ditch to cross, which was wide and deep. For an instant even Baird was staggered, and his men ran right and left seeking for a passage. Kasim Ali and he were close together; there was a scaffolding, and a plank over it leading to the rampart on the other side: it was enough, the way was found, and hundreds poured over it quicker than thought.

It was the last sight the Sultan saw—everything else swam before his eyes. He looked stupefied, and said, hurriedly and gloomily, "It is finished—where are my bearers? take me to the palace. Come! haste! or we are too late."

They led him to his palankin, mingling with the fugitives, who in the passage between the two walls were rushing on to the small gate where it had been left. Men had been sent for it, but what bearer could struggle against that frantic crowd? As they hurried on, Rājah Khan vainly tried to persuade him to fly by the river-gate; they might yet escape to the fastnesses of the west.

"Peace!" cried the Sultan as he stumbled and fell. They raised him—a shot had struck him; he was sick to death, but they were strong men, and they urged him on, supporting him. Another cry he uttered—they saw blood pour from his back—he was wounded once more; but the gate was close at hand, and they strained every nerve, to reach it. Hundreds were struggling there; the fierce English were behind, advancing with loud oaths and cheers

- They reached the palankin, and laid the Sultan in it
- "Water! water!" he gasped, "ah! I am choking! take me out, take me out, I shall die here! Water for the love of God, water! one drop! one drop!"

"They come, *Hazrât*," said Rajah Khan, trying to rouse the dying man, "they come, they are near; let us tell them who you are, they will spare thee."

"Spare me!" he cried, rousing himself at the last words. "No! they burn for revenge, and I should be hanged like a dog, no! I will die here." He was very faint, and spoke feebly

At this moment a ball pierced his skull, the Sultan's eyes glared for an instant, quivered in their sockets; then his head fell, and he was dead. The Lion of the Faith, the refuge of the world, had gone to his account!

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW EVERYONE CAME TO HIS OWN.

I — The last of Tippu Sultan.

"Well met, noble Kasim," cried Philip Dalton, "keep with me, you know the prisons?"

"Every one, colonel, but haste! They may even now be destroying the prisoners."

Philip shuddered, there was no time for thought. Many men were around him, and they rushed on, led by Kasim Ali, whose reddened sword, and armour sprinkled with blood, showed how hard he had been fighting.

Eagerly did those two and Charles Hayward search every part of the Fort, and every place where it was possible that prisoners could have been concealed. They found none. And when the palace was opened they rushed into its most secret prisons and burst them open. They found traces of recent habitation by Englishmen; and while their fears were horribly confirmed, their last hopes for Herbert Compton departed.

"Ah! could I but meet the villain Jaffar!" cried Kasim, as they gave up further search, for it was now dark, "if indeed he be alive, then would we wring from him the fate of your poor friend. He may be found. I know his haunts, and will watch them all night; I will come to you in the morning."

"I shall be here with my regiment," Dalton said sadly, "but I have no hope, for that cowardly villain will have fled long before now with his ill-gotten wealth."

The morning broke gloomily after that fearful day and night; for during the night there had been alarms, shots, and screams from terrified women.

There were some excesses, but they were checked. As the day advanced, order was restored once more, and the moderation of the English in their victory, their justice, and protection of all, is yet sung and said through the country by wandering minstrels.

The Sultan's body had been discovered where he had fallen, his faithful attendant lay beside him, with others who had fought with him to the last. They were brought into the palace, and recognised by the women with bitter grief.

The last rites of the faith were performed upon the body. The grave clothes, which, brought from Mekha, had been for years in his possession, were put on with the proper ceremonies, the sheet, filled with flowers, was laid over the body, the attendant Mullahs chanted thrice the proper verses of the Koran.

The procession passed slowly out of the palace, the Mullahs chanting the funeral service in slow and melancholy notes. The conquerors of the dead awaited his coming, and, in silent homage to their illustrious enemy, lifted their plumed hats as the body passed on to its last resting-place beside his father Hardar. The troops, which had the day before been arrayed in arms against him, now paid the last honours to his death, and through a street of British soldiers, resting upon their fire-arms reversed, while their bands played the dead march, the procession wound its way. Without, in the street, were thousands of men, who, frantic in their grief, cried aloud to God, and women, who beat their breasts, and wailed, or else uttered piercing shrieks of woe, flung dust into the air, and, casting loose their hair, strove to prostrate themselves before the body of the dead. The solemn chant proceeded, each verse sung by the Mullahs who in their flowing robes preceded the coffin, was repeated by all around. The body was surrounded by all the officers of Tippu's late army who had survived, and those of

the Nizam's force, on foot, and there was one of his sons on horseback, who sat in a kind of stupor at the overwhelming affliction.

The day had been gloomy, and was close and hot. Not a breath of wind stirred the trees, and heavy masses of clouds hung over the city, and at times a low muttering growl of thunder would break, and rattle seemingly all over the heavens. Men felt heavily the weight of the atmosphere, and every now and then looked up at the threatening mass which hung above them.

The procession reached the burial-place. The band now ceased, and the bier being laid down, the body was taken from it, preparatory to being laid in the grave. The Mulla (for one alone now officiated) raised his voice in the chant of the first creed, it was a powerful one, but now sounded thin and small among that vast assembly. He had said only a few words, when a flash of lightning burst from above, nearly blinding them, and a peal of thunder followed, so crashing, so stunning, that the stoutest hearts quailed under it. It died away, and as it died away far into the east, the melancholy tone of the Mulla's voice, which had been drowned in it, again arose clear and distinct, like the distant wail of a trumpet.

The heavens were still for a while, but as the body was laid in its last narrow resting-place, its face to the west, again a crashing peal burst forth, and the words of the Mulla were lost in the deafening roar.

The companies formed on each side of the grave to pay their last tribute of respect to a soldier's memory, and the word was given—"Fire!" The rattle which followed seemed to be taken up by the sky, away rolled the awful echoes into the far west, and, lost for a moment among the huge crags and mountains of the Ghats, seemed to return with double force to meet the peals of artillery and volleys of musketry which broke from the fort and the British army. The bands struck up again, but they

were dimly heard, and, as all returned to the sound of their music, it seemed a mockery amidst the din and turmoil of that tempest.

2—*After Ten Years*

A few days later, Herbert Compton was lying in the warm afternoon sunshine upon the green grass on the highest point of the mountain fortress, which had been his prison for ten long years. A few showers had fallen in the morning, and the air was soft and balmy; the dry winds of May had already become mild, and the summer was beginning to burst forth. He looked down over the sheer precipice at the vast forests below, and the wide view of mountains and plain in the distance.

Ten long years of solitude! It had been an unreal life, shut off from mankind. From his prison he looked daily over a wide country, but he had no news as to what was happening in the world. He had no hope of escape, and his only companion was nature. The only events that had broken the monotony of his existence had been the occasional visits of Jaffar Sahib, who came with the Sultan's demands for assistance, plans of fortifications, or military instruction—demands which were always scornfully refused. The Sultan had from the first taken it into his head that Compton was a man of education and skill beyond his fellows; and he needed his military experience and ability for the training of his troops. Often he would forget him for months. Once or twice, provoked by his obstinate refusals, he had issued orders for his death, and had cancelled them as soon as they were written. So Compton had lingered on, and on this particular afternoon, as he lay idly dreaming on the grass, he had no idea that his deliverance was at hand.

He heard a step behind him, and turning, saw the officer of his guard standing looking at him.

"Get up!" he said, "I have news for you."

"Speak!" said Herbert—"what news? is Jaffar coming again? is he arrived?"

"Not so," said the man, "you are to travel."

Herbert's heart sank within him.

"To travel!" he said anxiously, "has the Sultan sent for me?"

"No," said the man, "~~he~~" has not—he is dead. The English have taken the city, and the Sultan ~~is~~ no more."

"Merciful Providence!" cried Herbert aloud in his own tongue, "is this true, or is it a dream? *killed*, did you say?"

"Ay, Sahib," said the man, dashing a tear from his eye, "he was a great man, and has died like a soldier! Will you come? Your countrymen will look for you now, and perhaps the act of taking you to them will give me favour in their eyes. As to this post, it will be abandoned—no one will need it, and if we remain here, no one will remember us. What do you think?"

But he spoke to one who heeded not his words—they hardly fell upon his ear. Herbert had knelt down, and on the spot where he had so often sat in despair, he knelt down and poured out his thanks to God. Then he arose. "Are you ready?" he said.

"To-morrow morning, Sahib, ere the dawn breaks—there is a moon—we will set out. In four days if we travel fast, we shall be at the city."

* * * *

"Have you seen the poor fellow who has been just brought into camp upon a cot, Dalton?" said an officer of the staff, who lounged into Philip's tent, about noon, some days after the above. "It seems he was confined in a hill-fort and the garrison have brought him in. Poor fellow! he is in a high fever, for they rested, by the way in the jungles, and there he took it. But the surgeon is looking after him; they have taken him into the hospital."

'Some Indian, I suppose,' said Philip, looking up ; he was writing to his wife

"No—an Englishman, it was supposed there were none left, but—"

"Good heavens!" cried Philip, seizing his cap, and rushing suddenly from the tent "If it should be he!—merciful Providence!—zf—"

He flew across the camp, the officer looked after him in wonder "What can he mean?" he said aloud. He saw Philip run at full speed to the hospital tent, and he followed him there more leisurely and looked in. Philip was kneeling beside the bed of the sufferer, whose hands were clasped in his, the tears were streaming down his cheeks, and he was striving to speak. The other's eyes were upraised, while his lips moved as if in prayer, and a look of silent thankfulness, of joy, of perfect peace and happiness was upon his handsome features. The officer looked for a few minutes, and hurried away to hide his emotion. "It must be Captain Compton," he said, "so long missing, I will not disturb them"

It was he indeed. In that silent grasp of the hand, —in the recognition at once of the friend, and even brother, of his early years, Herbert had already forgotten all his sufferings.

Not long did he remain on that humble bed. Removed to Philip's tent, and in his company and that of Charles Hayward, he felt, as they told him of the events of the past, that it was like one of those blissful fancies which had cheated him so often. He fell asleep, and dreamed of joy and peace, and awoke refreshed by rest, and the medicine of the surgeon who attended him. He gazed around, and his eyes met the happy faces and joyful looks of his friends. Then, then only, did he feel it all to be true.

3.—*Kasim's Story*

Day by day Herbert made progress towards recovery ; and with peace of mind, returned strength

and vigour. He had been ill for nearly a fortnight before the time we speak of, and had been tended with constant care by his dear friends and brothers. There was another too, the brave Kasim Ali, who had been quickly summoned to Philip's tent after the arrival of the lost one, and who had rejoiced in his recovery with joy as genuine as the others.

"How often I told you to hope, Sahib," he would say to Colonel Dalton as he looked on the joy of the friends, and their love for each other. "How often I said he was not dead, that the Sultan (may his grave be honoured) would not destroy him."

And then they would shake their heads, and think how little would have been the chance of their ever meeting again upon earth, if the Sultan had been alive.

"You appear to cling to his memory with affection," said Dalton, in reply to a burst of praise which Kasim had uttered. "yet he used you ill, and would have killed you."

"I do," he replied, "he was a great man—such an one as India will never see again. He had great ambition, wonderful ability, perseverance, and the art of leading men. He had patient application, and nothing was done without his sanction, even to the meanest affairs, and the business of his dominions was vast. You will admit he was brave, and died like a soldier. He was kind and considerate to his servants, and a steady friend to those he loved. Yes, he was a great man."

"Yet he was treacherous to you, Mır Sahib," said Philip.

"Ay, and had he not been so, you might now have been far from here. You see, sirs, the power of destiny, which, working even by such mean instruments as myself and Jaffar, has wrought great ends."

"What treachery?" said Herbert Compton. "I have wondered to see you here in the English camp, but thought you had been admitted to protection like the rest of the Sultan's officers."

"It is a long tale," said Kasim, but your friend the colonel, knows much of it already, and he will tell it to you."

"Not so," said Philip, "tell it yourself I should only make mistakes. Besides, I hear you married the widow of your late patron, and I want to hear all about that."

"Come!" said Herbert, "let me hear your story; I have talked long enough, and can listen patiently."

Kasim then related his adventures, from the time he had appeared as a youth in Tippu's Durbar, to that in which, wearied by his cruelties and uneven temper, he had left him, and had so narrowly escaped assassination

"I reached my village," he continued, "and long remained in secrecy, enjoying the quiet of my own home I read my favourite poets, wrote verses, and a history of my own adventures, to pass the time. But in truth, after so much excitement, I at length grew tired of the dull life, and looked around me for employment

'I applied to the Nizam for the administration of the affairs and collection of the revenue of my district, and was soon busy enough. In connection with my new duties I visited the city of Hyderabad, and was courteously received by the Nizam himself and some of his officials. I was delighted with the city, and the polite and courtly character of its nobles, and I remained longer than I had intended.

'One day I was riding through the streets, when a woman, rather old, but decently dressed as a servant, ran towards me and, catching hold of the rein of my horse, uttered a loud cry of joy. The horse was a spirited one, and began to prance and bound, and she dared not approach me. I saw her speak to my groom, and when she had learned where I lived, she told him she would come in the evening, waved her hand to me, and darted down a narrow street.

'About dark a woman came, closely veiled, leading another. Both, as they entered, threw themselves at

my feet, uttering expressions of joy. They could not speak intelligibly for some time, nor would they unveil, though I could hear from their voices that they were aged. At length one playfully pulled the veil from the other's head, and to my joy and surprise I beheld Meeran, the nurse of Ameena, the Khan's wife. I recognised her instantly, and, raising her up, welcomed her cordially. Sahib, the other was Sozun

'I was, as you may suppose, anxious to know Ameena's fate. Was she alive?

"She lives, Mir Sahib," said Meeran, "she lives, blessed be God!"

"Alive!" I cried, "but perhaps she is another's; some nobleman hath heard of her beauty, and hath sought her in second marriage?"

"No, by your soul!" cried Sozun, "she is still unmarried. She is as beautiful as ever, the years that have passed now seem but as hours!"

"And the wound?" I asked.

"Ah! it was a horrible gash," said Meeran, shuddering, "and it was long before it healed; but she is well and strong now."

"Come," said I, "I must see her. I am not married, I never should have married, perhaps. Come! it is my destiny. How it has been worked out!"

'They led the way joyfully. Her mother had been told of my presence in the city by Meeran in the morning, and closely veiled, she sat in her private apartment, awaiting me. Her husband was absent on some military duty, so I had to arrange all with her.

'The old lady welcomed me with a cry of joy. "Blessed be God," she cried, "that you are here! We have heard so much of your brave deeds, and your rescue of my daughter! Oh that my lord were here to welcome you, and greet you as a son!"

"And Ameena," I said, "tell me how is she? Does she still remember Kasim Ali? I am rich, I am

high in rank, I have left the Sultan's service, and am now in that of your own Government. I have never married, and she is now unmarried. I desire to make her my wife."

"Fie!" said the old lady, "you are in too great a hurry!" But she seemed pleased all the same at my eagerness.

As there was nothing to hinder the marriage, and both sides were willing, the Mullah came the next evening. Such a marriage as mine required no long ceremony—it was only that of the Koran. Some friends were sent for, and in their presence the marriage settlements were signed. And Ameena, whom I had rescued three times from death, was my wife.

From her I learned how she had been saved on that dreadful night when I thought she had been killed by the Khan. She had been hidden by Meeran and Sozun in a small tent in the Fort until the siege was over. Then disguised as a servant, she had escaped with Meeran, Sozun and Zulfikar to the Nizam's army, where she was joyfully welcomed by the general Sikandar Beg, an old friend of her father's. He was a father to her, and brought her safely to Hyderabad, to her own home.

Not long after the marriage, Rustum Ali Khan, Ameena's father, arrived and welcomed me cordially as his son-in-law. I became known in the city, and when there was talk of war with Tippu Sultan, the Nizam gave me the command of a regiment of horse and a title. When I took my beloved wife to my village, my mother was filled with joy, and received her as her daughter. Sirs, you know the rest of my tale."

"You are a noble fellow!" exclaimed the Englishmen, "and believe me," Dalton added, "you will often be remembered, and your wife too, when we are far away in our own land."

The tears started to Kasim Ali's eyes—he brushed them away hastily. "I am a fool," said he, "but if

any one, when I served him who ruled yonder, had told me that I should have loved Englishmen, I would have quaiuelled with him even to blood-shed, and now I should be unhappy indeed if I carried not away your esteem. I pray you then remember me kindly, and now bid me depart to-day," he said—but his voice trembled "I have spoken long, and the Captain is weary "

Dalton's regiment moved soon after, and Kasim and his risala accompanied it. They marched by easy stages, and soon Compton was able once more to mount a horse, and to enjoy a gallop with the dashing Risaldar, whose horsemanship was beyond all praise. At Bangalore they halted some time as it was to be a station for the Mysore field-force, and Dalton's regiment was to belong to it.

When Kasim Ali could stay no longer, he came to take his leave "I shall pass the old Fakir," he said; "have you any message for him? the old man still lives, and prays for you "

"We will go to him," said Philip, "'tis but a day's ride." Herbert agreed readily, and they set out that day.

The old man's joy at seeing them cannot be told. The certainty that his poor efforts were valued, were to him more than gold or precious stones, but his declining years were made happy by a small pension, which was regularly paid, and he wanted no more the casual charity of passing travellers.

And there, beneath those beauteous trees, which even now remain, the friends parted, with sincere regret, and a regard which never diminished, though they never met again. The martial and picturesque soldiers of Kasim Ali awaited him, Philip and Herbert watched him as he bounded into his saddle, and soon the gay and glittering group was lost behind the trees at a little distance.

A few weeks after, Herbert Compton sailed for England, and in due time was welcomed by his family in the old home as one who had risen from the dead.

4—*The End of a Villain*

About three weeks after Seringapatam had fallen two men, one driving a heavily-laden pony, passed out of the gate of the Fort, and took their way towards the river. The rain had fallen much during that and the previous day, but there was as yet no more water than usual in the river.

"Come on, Madar!" said one, "that beast goes as slow as if he had an elephant's load, come on! we are lucky to get across, for there is no water in the river."

"I tell you the brute will never travel, Jaffar, the load is too heavy. Why would you not buy the other?"

"I could not afford it," he said, "one is enough, come on!"

The pony was laden with gold and silver bars and heavy stuffs, cloth of gold and silver, the plunder of years, and more especially of that night when the Sultan was killed, for Jaffar knew the places where the silver and gold utensils were kept, and he had laden himself with the spoil.

"He! he! he!" said he chuckling, "we will go to Madras and live with the kafir Feringhis; no one will know us there, and we can trade with this money."

"Good!" said Madar, "it is a wise thought; may your prosperity increase!"

They were now on the edge of the river. Opposite the Fort it is broad, and the bed, one sheet of rock, has been worn into thousands of deep holes and gulleys by the rushing stream. It was no easy matter to get the over-laden beast across these, and he often stumbled and fell against the sharp rocks.

"Curses light on you!" cried Jaffar to the animal as it lay down at last, groaning heavily, and he screwed its tail desperately to urge it on. "Will you not get up? Help me, Madar, to raise it."

They did so by their united strength, but before it had gone a few paces it fell again. Jaffar was in

despair. There was nothing left but to unload it, and carry the burden piece by piece to the bank. They were doing this when a loud roaring was heard.

"What was that?" said Madar.

"Nothing, fool," said the other; "the wind, I dare say."

It was not—it was the roaring of the mighty river, as it poured down beyond the sharp turn above the Fort—a wall of water three feet high—foaming, boiling, roaring, dashing high into the air—a vast brown, thick, muddy mass, overwhelming everything in its course. Madar fled at once to the bank.

Jaffar cursed aloud. The bundles had been tied up with care, lest the money should fall out, and it was hard to lose all after years of toil. He tugged desperately at the knots—they would not come untied. He drew his sword and cut fiercely at them, bars of gold fell out, he seized as much as he could hold in his hands, and turned to fly. Some men were on the shore with Madar calling to him, he could not hear their words but he thought they pointed to a rock higher than the rest. He got upon it, or in another instant the roaring flood would have overwhelmed him. He was safe for a minute, the waters were rising not gradually, but fearfully fast. He clutched the rock, screamed, and prayed wildly. The rush of the boiling waters appeared to increase; his brain grew dizzy, then he tried to scramble up higher—to stand upright. In attempting this his foot slipped, those on the bank saw him toss his arms wildly into the air, and the next instant he was gone! The fearful tide rolled on in its majesty, but there was no sign of a living thing upon its turbid waters.

THE END.

NOTES.

CHAPTER I.

Page 1.—*June, 1788. i.e.,* nearly two years before the commencement of the Third Mysore War. At this time Tippu had been the ruler of Mysore for nearly six years, Haidar Ali, his father, having died in 1782. In 1786 he had taken the title of Padshah, or King.

Page 1.—*Adoni* or *Adwan*.—A town to the south of Hyderabad, and 64 miles from Bellary.

The Khan was travelling from Hyderabad to Seringapatam, by way of Adoni, Bellary, Nandidrug and Bangalore.

Page 1.—*Dekhan Horse*.—The Dekhan was noted for its breed of sturdy and swift horses and the Mahrattas (true Dekhanis) were famous as bold and dashing horsemen.

Page 2.—*Hazrūt*—*Hazūr*.—Titles of respect (lit "presence").

Page 2.—*Khanum*—lady, properly, the wife of a Khan or lord.

Page 8.—*Jai Bhowani*.—"Hail, Bhowani!" (the Goddess Kali or Durga).

Page 8.—*Shabash*!—Bravo! Well done!

CHAPTER II.

Page 12.—*Patel*.—The name given to the headman of a village in South India.

CHAPTER III

Page 16.—A *Syud* (or *Sayyid*)—A Muslim who traces his descent from the Prophet.

Page 16.—*Bijapur*.—A Mohammadan Kingdom in the Dekhan, ruled over by the Adil Shah dynasty.

of kings It was originally part of the old Bahmani Kingdom, but became an independent state in 1490, when its Governor, Adil Shah, revolted and became its first king. It lasted until 1686, when it was conquered by the Moghul Emperor, Aurungzeb.

Page 19.—*Rustum*—The great semi-legendary hero of Persia, who was said to have commanded the armies of Kai-Kaus, King of Persia, about 600 B.C.

CHAPTER IV.

Page 27.—*Bellary*—A town 270 miles N.-W. of Madras

The fort stands on a rock 450 feet high

Page 32.—*Harz Bol.*—A war-cry of the Mahrattas : “call on Hari,” Vishnu or Krishna, for help.

Page 32.—*Bismilla* !—In God’s name !

Page 34.—*Amin* !—Amen : may it be so !

CHAPTER V.

Page 35.—*Nandidrug.*—The famous rock-fortress 4,800 feet above sea-level, and 30 miles north of Bangalore The sides of the rock, on all sides but one, are sheer precipices The top is a broad tableland, in the centre of which is a deep hollow containing a large tank or reservoir of water. It was strongly fortified, and was considered impregnable until it was captured by assault in 1792 by Lord Cornwallis troops

Page 37.—*Jemadar.*—An officer in an Indian Cavalry regiment.

Page 44.—*Munshi*—clerk : scribe, secretary.

CHAPTER VI.

Page 48.—*Bangalore.*—The fortress of Bangalore was first built in the 16th century ; but it was rebuilt, strengthened and enlarged by Haidar Ali in 1761, and was considered the strongest military fort in the Mysore kingdom after the capital, Seringapatam.

Page 48.—*Kafir*—infidel, unbeliever.

Page 49.—*The Treaty of Mangalore*—So called because it was signed immediately after Tippu had starved the small English garrison in Mangalore into submission. By this treaty it was agreed that the prisoners on both sides should be given up, and that each party should restore places taken from the other. In this way Tippu recovered all the territory held by his father in Kanara and Malabar

Page 51.—*Dooly*—A small palankin, or chair, carried on men's shoulders

Page 51.—*Allah Hafiz*—"May God protect."

Page 52.—*Feringhi*.—European

Page 52.—*The Governor*—The Governor of Bangalore at this time was Bahadur Khan

Page 55.—*General Matthews*—In 1783, on receipt of the news of Haidar Ali's death, the Bombay Government sent General Matthews to seize Bednur which is on the top of the Western Ghats above the Malabar Coast. After fighting his way up the Ghats, Matthews took Bednur and several other forts. But his force was too small to defend the place against the large army Tippu sent to retake it, and it had to surrender. Tippu found the treasury empty, and was furious. He accused Matthews and his officers of concealing the money, and, although Matthews had surrendered only on the promise that he and his troops should be allowed to withdraw in safety to the coast, Tippu sent him and many other officers and men in irons to Seringapatam. As a matter of fact the treasure had been carried off by the Governor of Bednur, Sheikh Ayaz, when he surrendered the fortress to Matthews. Matthews was kept a prisoner until he died of eating poisoned food in the prison. According to another account, he was beaten to death by his guards with the butt-ends of their guns

CHAPTER VII.

Page 57.—*Seringapatam* or *Srirangapatam*—takes its name from the large temple of Ranganatha.

It was the capital of the Rajas of Mysore in the 17th century, and of Haidar Ali and Tippu in the 18th century. To-day it is chiefly a show place of historic interest, as it is too malarious to be popular as a place of residence. Seringapatam is built at the western end of an island three miles long and one mile wide, which is formed by the Kaveri river and its branches. It was strongly fortified by Haidar Ali and Tippu, who considered it, with its walls and outworks, the river, and the thick jungles on its banks, to be impregnable; but it would have been taken by Lord Cornwallis in 1791 if Tippu had not submitted in time, and it was stormed and captured by General Harris in 1799.

Page 60.—*Farashes*—properly “Carpet-Spreaders:” but they also acted as police, and carried out minor punishments, like flogging.

Page 62.—*Masnad*.—A part of the room furnished with thick cushions for reclining a couch.

CHAPTER VIII.

Page 68.—*The Fort*.—The walls of the Fort of Seringapatam are still standing, and within are the two large ancient Hindu Temples, the mosque built by Haidar Ali, and the tombs of Haidar Ali and Tippu. Part of Tippu's palace has been destroyed, but some of the buildings are still standing and are used as a sandal-wood store.

Page 69.—*The Duria-i-Daulat*—or *Daryá Dáulat Bâgh*, “the garden of the wealth of the sea.” This garden is on the southern side of the left branch of the Kaveri river, and midway between the Lal Bagh and the Fort, and surrounds a palace which was a favourite residence of Tippu. After the fall of Seringapatam, Sir Arthur Wellesley (afterwards the Duke of Wellington) lived there. Its outside walls are covered with a series of paintings representing the victories of Tippu over the English—especially his defeat of Baillie at Perambakan.

These paintings were rubbed out by Tippu's orders before the siege, but were restored by Sir Arthur Wellesley. They were again repainted by a native artist in 1854 by the order of Lord Dalhousie.

Page 71.—*Chowries*—Fly-flappers, made of the white hair of the tail of the Tibet cow

Page 72.—*Tippu Sultan*—At this time (1788) Tippu was thirty-five years old, having been born at Devanballi in 1753. His appearance is thus described by Major Allan, who saw him, and who was one of the officers who discovered Tippu's body after he had been killed in the assault in 1791.—“Tippu was of low stature, corpulent, with high shoulders, and a short thick neck, but his feet and hands were remarkably small; his complexion was rather dark, his eyes large and prominent, with small arched eye-brows, and his nose aquiline: he had an appearance of dignity, or perhaps sternness, in his countenance, which distinguished him above the common order of people.”

Page 72.—*Nazr (Nuzzur)*.—Offering, present.

CHAPTER IX.

Page 80.—*Kabál Drúg*.—A high rock near Nandidrúg from which both Haidar Ali and Tippu had prisoners flung down and killed. See next chapter.

Page 83.—*The Nizam of Hyderabad*.—At this time the fifth Nizam, Mir Nizam Ali Khan (1761-1803) was ruling in Hyderabad (or Haidarabad). Hyderabad became an independent state in 1720, about which time Nizam-ul-Mulk (Viceroy of the Dekhan, and Wazir of the Emperor) threw off his allegiance to the Moghul Emperors, and founded the dynasty which rules to-day over the territories known as the Nizam's Dominions.

CHAPTER X.

Page 86.—*The money buried in Bednur* (See note on *General Matthews*, for Chapter VI)

Page 87.—*Fakir*.—Religious devotee commonly used also as a name for a beggar.

Page 89.—*Muazzin*.—One who chants the *azán* or call to prayer.

Page 89.—*Serai*.—Caravansary inn.

CHAPTER XI

Page 92.—*The Nairs*.—Hindu Tribes on the Malabar Coast.

Page 93.—*Haider Ali coveted Travancore*.—In 1766 Haider Ali overran Malabar, and contemplated conquering Travancore which was an independent Hindu state under its own Raja but he was prevented from doing so by the opposition of the Dutch at Kranganui, and his own campaign on the eastern coast. Tippu was anxious to subdue Travancore because he saw that he could thus get possession of the western coast, which could enable him to import munitions of war, and attack the English on two sides.

Page 96.—*Anaimalai Range*.—The range of hills to the south of the Nilgiris and to the north of Travancore. The "plain which extends westward to the ocean" between these two ranges, is called the Palghat Gap.

Page 98.—*Mahout*.—Elephant driver

CHAPTER XII.

Page 110.—*This miserable Raja is upheld by them*.—The Raja of Travancore was under the protection of the East India Company. He appealed to the Company for help and the Madras Government protested to Tippu against his proposed attack on Travancore. As Tippu took no notice of the remonstrance, Lord Cornwallis formed a Triple Alliance against him consisting of the Company, the Nizam, and the Poona Mahrattas.

Page 110.—*Baillie*.—A force of 4,000 men under Colonel Baillie was surrounded and cut up by Haidar Ali's army at Peimambakan in 1780. Tippu distinguished himself in the battle. None of those who were captured were released, some of them died, some were put to death, and some lingered on in captivity. Colonel Baillie was kept a prisoner at Seringapatam, and Captain Baird (afterwards General Sir David Baird) was confined along with him. Baird survived to lead the assault on Seringapatam in 1799, but Baillie died in the prison of grief and neglect.

Page 110.—*Matthews*. (See note on Chapter VI.)

Page 110.—*The wall which this Raja has built, etc.*—The history of the wall, known as the "Travancore Lines," is as follows. In 1761 the Raja of Cochin appealed to his neighbour, the Raja of Travancore, for help against an attack on the part of the Zamorin of Calicut. A Travancore force under General deLancy, drove the Zamorin back, and as a reward for his services the Raja of Travancore received a tract of country belonging to Cochin. On this land was built a line of fortifications extending thirty miles from the sea to a range of lofty hills. A strong fort was constructed on the coast at Kaiapilli, and a wall 20 feet thick and 12 feet high, with batteries and bastions at intervals, was made all along the frontier. A deep ditch was dug along the wall and a jungle of bamboos and thorny shrubs planted. This wall was meant to resist attacks from Malabar. In 1766, Cochin submitted to Haidar Ali so that Tippu could say that this wall was built upon "our subject's territory, over which we have a right to pass to Cochin."

Page 110.—*Within sight of the wall*.—Tippu's army consisting of 14,000 infantry and 500 pioneers, appeared before the wall on the 28th of December, 1789. The attack which led to the terrible disaster which is described in the next chapter took place

the day after, 29th December, and not, as Meadows Taylor describes it, several months later.

CHAPTER XIII

Page 113.—“*Allah Yár! Dín! Dín!*” —Tippu’s war cry “God (is our) friend! The Faith! The Faith!”

Page 114.—*Syud—his Relative*—Probably Sayyid Sahib, whose daughter Tippu had married. He was an able man, and especially experienced in revenue affairs; but he was not thought much of as a military commander. He was killed in the assault on Seringapatam in 1791.

Page 122.—*The Tiger will have Blood.*—Tippu took the tiger as his emblem. His soldiers’ uniforms and his cannon were decorated with tigers’ stripes, and his throne was ornamented with golden tigers’ heads. He is said to have declared that he would rather live two days as a tiger than two hundred years as a sheep.

CHAPTER XIV.

Page 126.—*The Embassy to Turkey.*—This embassy was instructed to go on to France after first visiting Constantinople, but Tippu’s envoys were so badly received by the Sultan of Turkey that they returned in a rage.

Page 129.—*Fatehas.*—Thank-offerings.

CHAPTER XV.

Page 134.—*The Sarkár.*—The Government.

Page 135.—*The Gift of God.*—Khudádád.

CHAPTER XVI

Page 319.—*The Campaign.*—Lord Cornwallis declared war in 1790, and the campaign of that year was conducted by armies operating under the

command of General Medows, of Madras. It was not very successful, however, and Cornwallis came to Madras and assumed command himself in January 1791. He soon took Bangalore on the 20th of March and threatened Seringapatam.

Page 139.—*Cavalry Skirmishes*.—Lord Cornwallis, on approaching Seringapatam, found the Mysore troops drawn up in a strong position. He attacked and drove them back, and the defeat would have been complete but for the accidental or intentional bungling of the Nizam's Cavalry.

Page 147.—*Mir Sadik, the Darwan*.—Mir Muhammad Sadik was Tippu's finance minister, and was hated by the peasantry for his greed and extortions. He was one of the few ministers who remained with Tippu to the end. *Kishun Rao* was one of the very few Hindus employed by Tippu; in fact there was only one, the Brahman *Purnaya*, who was admitted to his inner counsels.

Page 148.—*The Army retreated towards Bangalore*.—On May 26th 1791.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Page 155.—*Nandidrug.fell*.—This great fortress was taken by assault with little loss on the 19th of October 1791.

Page 155.—*Savan Drug*.—A great rock of granite 4,000 feet above sea-level. Its shape is like that of a gigantic whale, and its sides are precipitous. It was surrounded by thick jungles of bamboo, which made it a very malarious spot. Savan Drug was taken on December 17, 1791.

Page 156.—*The Night Attack of February 6*.—Lord Cornwallis' army was encamped six miles north of the capital on the 6th of February 1792. He delivered a night attack and crossing the river, established himself on the eastern side of the island. On the 7th of February a desperate effort on the part of Tippu to drive the English out was defeated.

CHAPTER XIX.

Page 172 — *The Reply of Cornwallis*—received by Tippu on the 22nd of February 1792

Page 175 — *The Kalma*—The Mohammadan confession of Faith

CHAPTER XXI

Page 186.—*Seven Years*.—The Third Mysore War ended with Tippu's submission in 1792, the Fourth Mysore War began and ended in the first few months of 1799.

Page 186.—*Lord Mornington*, afterwards Marquis of Wellesley, Governor-General, 1798-1805.

Page 187 — *Napoleon's Schemes, etc*—Napoleon had a grand scheme of founding a great French Empire in Asia. The conquest of Egypt was to be only a beginning. His great plans, however, were wrecked by Nelson's destruction of the French Fleet at Aboukir in 1798 (the Battle of the Nile), which cut his communications with France, and by Sir Sydney Smith's defence of Acre (in Palestine) in 1799.

Page 187 — *Sindhia*. Daulat Rao Sindhia, son of the great Mahatta leader, Madhoji Sindhia.

Page 187.—*Siddleshwar*—The Siddleshwar Pass leads from the province of Coorg into Mysore.

Page 187.—*Malwally*, ten miles west of the Shimsha River, a tributary of the Kaveri.

Page 188.—*Sosillay*—or, Sosilé. General Harris, instead of marching south-west from Bangalore straight on Seringapatam, marched south, and crossed the Kaveri at Sosilé, fifteen miles to the east of Seringapatam. In this way the army found plenty of fodder and crossed the ford of the river unopposed.

Page 190.—*The opposite side*, i.e., the south-west side.

Page 190 — *The breach*, at the north-west angle of the Fort. It is still to be seen from a spot on the

opposite bank of the river, where two cannons are fixed to mark the place where the English batteries were erected. The English guns opened fire on this part of the wall on May 2

Page 190.—*Mir Ghafur*.—Sayyid Mir Ghafur had been a cavalry officer in the East India Company's service and was taken prisoner by Tippu. He accepted service under Tippu, and became one of his bravest and ablest officers. Colonel Wilks, in his *History of Mysore*, records a despairing saying of Mir Ghafur about the Sultan "He is surrounded by boys and flatterers, who will not even let him see with his own eyes. I do not wish to survive the result. I am going about in search of death and cannot find it." He was killed by a cannon-shot while bravely defending the breach.

Page 191.—*The prisoners died*.—Before the assault was made, thirteen English soldiers, who had been taken prisoners, were killed by the Sultan's orders, their necks being twisted by professional executioners, called Jeltis

Page 191.—*The following day*, the 4th of May 1799.

Page 191.—*Rajah Khan*.—He was found by the English officers after Tippu had been killed, lying wounded under the palankin. It was he who pointed out the Sultan's body

Page 192.—*General Baird*—Baird had been a prisoner in Seringapatam for three years, having been captured along with Colonel Baillie at the battle of Perambakan in 1780. He was given command of the storming party, and stepping out of the trenches at 1-30 o'clock he said to his men—"Now my brave fellows, follow me, and prove yourselves worthy of the name of British soldiers"

Page 195.—*The Gate*—The Water Gate on the north face of the Fort is usually pointed out as the place where Tippu fell. But this is a mistake. All the accounts agree in saying that Tippu was killed in trying to pass from the "outer rampart" through the "inner rampart" into the town, in order to get to .

the palace. If he had been killed in the Water Gate, he could only have been trying to escape towards the river. The gate where he was killed was probably in an inner line of wall which was destroyed by the order of Colonel Wellesley at the end of 1799. It therefore no longer exists.

CHAPTER XXII.

Page 197.—*The Sultan's body.*—It was General Baird and some of his officers who, after a long search, found Tippu's body in the gateway. Major Allan, who was present, thus describes it: "When Tippu was brought from under the gateway, his eyes were open, and the body was so warm that, for a few moments, Colonel Wellesley and myself were doubtful whether he was not alive; on feeling his pulse and heart, that doubt was removed. He had four wounds, three in the body and one in the temple; the ball having entered a little above the right ear, and lodged in the cheek. His dress consisted of a jacket of fine white linen, loose drawers of flowered chintz, with a crimson cloth of silk and cotton round his waist, a handsome pouch with a red and green silk belt, hung across his shoulder, his head was uncovered, his turban being lost in the confusion of his fall: he had an amulet on his arm, but no ornaments whatever."

Page 198.—*One of his sons.*—Abdul Khalik, his second son.

Page 206.—*Risala.*—A cavalry regiment; and *risaldar*, its commander.